THE
SKANDA-PURĀNA

PART IX

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SKANDA PURĀṆA

BOOK III : BRĀHMA-KHAṆḌA

SECTION II : DHARMĀRAṆYA-KHAṆḌA

CHAPTER ONE

Yudhiṣṭhira's Enquiries

Obeisance to Śrīgaṇeśa

(1) I bow down to that Supreme Lord Śrīrāmacandra who is free from impurities. He has natural brilliance. The Lord's (Rāmacandra's) name is a boat unto the three worlds for crossing the ocean of worldly existence. Due to his power this entire universe manifests itself always as born, steady and running its course; he is *Caitanyaghana* (full of consciousness), and is beyond the (common) sources of valid knowledge and he can be known through the Upaniṣads only.

(2) Wife, sons, wealth, attendants, relations, dear ones, mother, brother, father, father-in-law and all the members of the family, servants, wealth and prosperity, learning, beauty, pure abode, youth and multitudes of youthful maidens—all these are of no use at the time of death. Dharma alone is the helping friend.

1. In Naimiṣa, in the holy place of Nimiṣa,[1] Śaunaka and other sages performed a *Sattra* (Sacrifice) lasting for a thousand years. They performed the sacrifice for the attainment of the heavenly world.

2. Once, those sages including Śaunaka, saw Sūta coming and became extremely happy. They began to drink him in (as it were) by means of their eyes and excellent mind. The ascetics surrounded him in order to listen to wonderful stories.

3. After those noble-hearted ascetics had taken their seats, the son of Lomaharṣaṇa humbly occupied the seat offered to him.

4. On seeing him comfortably seated and on noting that no disturbing factors were around, the sages enquired about a few introductory things.

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1. This is the usual background of all Purāṇas. It is on Gomatī, in Sultanpur District, some forty miles from Ayodhyā.

5-6 "O dear one, your father learned the entire Purāṇic literature formerly; O son of Lomaharṣaṇa, has it been entirely learned by you too?

O Sūta, narrate that (i.e. such a) meritorious story that destroys all sins, by listening to which, the sin accumulated in the course of a hundred births, will be dissolved."

Sūta said:

7. After duly bowing down to the pair of feet of the glorious Goddess Sarasvatī, the pair of feet of the Lord of the Gaṇas as well as those of all the Devas, I recount (now as follows):

8-10. I bow down to Śaktis, Vasus, Grahas (Planets), deities of Yajñas etc. I bow down to the auspicious Brāhmaṇas and all important poets. I bow down to the beloved deities as well as to the excellent preceptor. I bow down to the splendid Devas, to Rāma and others in particular, by remembering whom one is undoubtedly liberated from all the sins of the three types. With their favour I shall recount the merits of all the Tīrthas, after bowing down to the Lord, the soul of Dharma, the controller of everyone.

11. May that Lord of Bhavānī save you all from sins. He is the Lord of Dharmāraṇya.[1] He is the eternal Lord of heaven. He is the Lord of Dharma, easy of access through steady practice of Yoga. He bestows permanent pleasures. He has pervaded the heart of everyone by means of Jīvakalā (? the digit in the form of the Individual Soul) for ever. By meditating upon him men cease to enter the prison of worldly existence.

Sūta said:

12-14. Once (Lord) Dharma went to the Assembly of Brahmā. On seeing that Assembly, he became devoted to knowledge then. On seeing the Assembly occupied by Devas and excellent sages, he became surprised. That Assembly was occupied by Devas, Yakṣas, Serpents, Cobras, Asuras, Sages, Siddhas and Gandharvas. They had occupied proper seats. O Brāhmaṇas, that Assembly was very comfortable, neither too cold nor too hot.

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1. Dharmāraṇya: This name is associated with many places. But this Dharmāraṇya, as mentioned in the text, is Moharpur (ancient Moherakapura), 14 miles to the north of Vindhyācala Town in Mirzapur District.

15. (Those who attend it) never feel hunger or thirst or exhaustion. That Assembly has been adorned with excellent jewels of diverse shapes and sizes.

16-18. That eternal Assembly is supported by columns. It is undecaying. It has unmeasured splendour because of various divine things that shine brilliantly. It is situated on the top of the heaven. It is self-luminous and it surpasses the moon, the sun and fire. It appears to deride the sun as it were (by its splendour).

It is there that Brahmā, the grandfather of all the worlds, stays always and rules Devas and human beings of different kinds single-handedly.

19-27. The lords of subjects (Patriarchs) worship this lord. Dakṣa, Pracetas, Pulaha, Marīci, Lord Kaśyapa, Bhṛgu, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Kratu, Prahlāda, Kardama, Atharvāṅgiras, Vālakhilyas, Marīcipas (a mythical race of sages), *Manas* (Mind), *Antarikṣa* (Ether), *Vidyās* (Sciences), *Vāyu* (Wind), *Tejas* (brilliance), water, earth, sound, touch, colour, taste, smell, Prakṛti, *Vikāras* (evolutes), the cause that is *Sat* as well as *Asat*, Agastya of great splendour, the powerful Mārkaṇḍeya, Jamadagni, Bharadvāja, Saṁvarta, Cyavana, the illustrious Durvāsas, the righteous Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, the holy lord Sanatkumāra, Yogācārya of great penance, Asita, Devala, Jaigīṣavya, the knower of reality, Āyurveda (the Science of longevity and health) that has eight sections, Gāndharva (Science of Musicology), the Moon along with Constellations, the Sun equipped with rays, Winds, *Tantus* (a succession of sacrificial performances), *Saṁkalpa* (Determination), *Prāṇa* (Vital Air) and all the noble souls in embodied form and engaged in great *Vratas* (holy observances and vows)—these and many others worshipped Brahmā.

28-36. Wealth, Virtue, Love, Delight, Hatred, *Tamas* (*Guṇa*), *Dama* (Control of mind and sense-organs) etc. came to that Assembly. Groups of Gandharvas and celestial damsels came to that Assembly collectively.

The Planets including Śukra (Venus), those near it, the Mantras *Rathantara, Harimān* and *Vasumān*, the honoured Viśvakarman, all the Vasus, all the groups of Manes, all the *Havis*-offerings, Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda, all the Scriptures, the Itihāsas, the Upavedas, all the Vedāṅgas (Ancillaries to the Vedas), *Medhā* (Intellect), *Dhṛti* (Courage), *Smṛti* (Memory), *Prajñā* (Wisdom), *Buddhi* (Intelligence), *Yaśas* (Fame), *Samās* (Years),

Kāla (Time, the cycle of time) which is divine, perpetual, everlasting and never-ending, all the wives of the Devas, all of whom had the speed of mind, Gārhapatyas, Pitṛs who wander in the heavenly worlds and who are well-known in the worlds, Somapas, Ekaśṛṅgas and all the ascetics, Nāgas (Serpents), Suparṇas ('excellent-winged beings') and animals worship Pitāmaha (God Brahmā). The immovables and the movables, the great living beings (or Mahābhūtas, Great Elements), Purandara, the lord of Devas, Varuṇa, Kubera and Mahādeva, the bestower of everything along with Umā go there.

37-40. All the Devas, Nārāyaṇa as well as the sages go there always. The sages, Vālakhilyas, those who were born of wombs and those who were not born of wombs (go there). He observed that whatever (all) movables and immovables are in the three worlds were present there in that Assembly. On seeing that Assembly occupied by the Devas and the excellent sages, that (lord) conversant with *Dharma*, became excessively surprised. He felt great delight. He experienced thrill and had his hair standing all over his body.

There Dharma of excessive splendour heard the sin-destroying story (of Dharmāraṇya) recounted by Vyāsa, of unmeasured brilliance.

41-46. He heard the fascinating divine story of Dharmāraṇya: the story that bestows virtue, wealth, love and salvation, the story that gives sons and grandsons etc. by being retained (in memory), by being listened to, by being read or seen.

On hearing that vast story encompassing the entire Cosmic Egg, he became very glad and his eyes became like a full-blown lotus.

Having accomplished his task, the virtuous-souled (Lord) Dharma became desirous of returning. He bowed down to Brahmā, the grandfather (of the worlds) (and took leave of him).

On being permitted by him, he went to the region of Yama. With the favour of Brahmā, he heard the divine story of Dharmāraṇya, the story that is holy, destructive of sins and bestower of merits. Along with his followers, he went towards Saṁyaminī (his capital).

47-54. Yama entered his city along with his ministers and followers. In the meantime, the prominent sage Nārada of excessive brilliance, who could not be looked at directly, an ascetic of impartial views, who was endowed with mercifulness and had burned his

body by means of penance (came there). He was engrossed in devotion to Viṣṇu; he went everywhere. The omniscient and ever pure sage, a regular reciter of the Vedas, came there to that Assembly.

On seeing him unexpectedly, Dharma became greatly delighted. Accompanied by his wife and followers, he gladly hurried to his presence (and said): "Today my life has become fruitful. Today my family has become blessed. Today my piety has become fruitful, because you, rich in penance, have come here."

He duly worshipped and honoured him by offering *Arghya*, *Pādya* etc. in accordance with the injunctions. He fell at his feet like a log of wood.

With due deference, he made him sit in an extremely splendid seat adorned with gold and jewels. The entire Assembly (remained motionless) as though painted in a picture, or like flames of lamps remaining steady in a windless place.

He enquired after his welfare. He duly welcomed him. Remembering the story of Dharmāraṇya, he derived matchless delight.

55-56. With a highly delighted mind, he worshipped Nārada. Nārada was surprised much on seeing Yama extremely joyous. He mentally thought thus: 'Why is Yama delighted so much?'

On seeing (Lord Dharma) in the form of Yamarāja in great delight and surprised in mind Nārada asked him then:

Nārada said:

57-59. Have you seen some astonishing thing? Or have you attained a higher position? (You are always) wicked. You are evil in action. You are malevolent in mind. You are always wrathful. You control sinners. Your (usual) form is domineering. But how have you assumed a gentle form? O lord, this is my doubt.

What is the reason whereby you appear to be endowed with (full of) great delight today? O (lord) of a huge body, tell me the reason for your joyfulness.

Dharmarāja said:

60-63. O son of Brahmā, I shall undoubtedly tell you. Let it be heard. Formerly I had been to the abode of God Brahmā to pay my respects (to him). There, I occupied my seat in the Assembly which was solely honoured by all the worlds. Many kinds of sto-

ries concerning pious activities were heard by me. They were charmingly meritorious and virtuous. These were heard directly from Vyāsa. They concerned Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure. They were destructive of all the multitudes of sins. O sage, by listening to these stories, people are liberated from all sins, (even) from that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. The listeners thereby redeem hundred and one generations of their ancestors.

Nārada said:

64. Of what nature was that story? Recount to me the story heard by you, O mighty-armed Yama. I am desirous of hearing that story.

Yama said:

65-70. Once I went to the world of Brahmā in order to bow down to the grandfather (of the worlds). I went to that region in the course of my quest for what should be done and what should not be done.

An astonishing thing was seen and heard by me there, O excellent sage. I heard the divine story of Dharmāraṇya recounted by Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana.

O Brāhmaṇa, I heard the highly meritorious and splendid story concerning the entire Cosmic Egg. It is full of good qualities and truth. So I am extremely delighted.

Further, O excellent sage, the cause (of my delight) is your visit. It is conducive to auspiciousness, happiness, welfare and victory.

Today I am blessed and contented, O sage. Today I am meritorious. Today I have become true to my name of Dharma, because I have seen the pair of your feet.

O Nārada, I am worthy of honour and adoration today. I am blessed and contented today. With the grace of your feet, I have become worthy of adoration in all the three worlds.

Sūta said:

71. The excellent sage was satisfied by words like these. With great devotion he asked (the lord) about the splendid story of Dharmāraṇya forest.

Nārada said:

72. O Dharma, the splendid story of the Dharmāraṇya forest has been heard (by you) directly from Vyāsa. Recount the whole of it to me truthfully and in detail.

Yama said:

73-75. O Brāhmaṇa, I am always busy in awarding to all beings who experience pleasure and pain, the state (fate) that is happy or otherwise in accordance with their Karmas. Yet, the association with good people is indeed for the (development of) virtue. It is conducive to the happiness and welfare both here and hereafter.

For the sake of the benefit of mankind, I shall recount everything that has been directly narrated by Vyāsa and heard (by me) in the presence of Brahmā.

Sūta said:

76. Whatever had been heard in the Assembly of Brahmā was recounted by Yama entirely from beginning to end leaving nothing in the middle. There is no doubt about it.

77-84. In the interim period between Kali and Dvāpara, Nārada went to the kingdom of the son of Dharma i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira in the mortal world.

As he approached, Nārada, a part of Śrī Hari, appeared like a blazing fire. His eyes were (brilliant) like the rising sun.

He had a huge tuft of hair matted perfectly with a twist to the left. He wore two cloths as white as rays of the moon. He was adorned with gold ornaments.

His Vīṇā (Lute) named Mahatī (or a big Vīṇā) was like a companion unto him. He kept it tucked up beneath his arm. A hide of black antelope formed his upper garment. He had a golden sacred thread.

He carried with him a staff and a waterpot in his hand. He was just like another Fire-god himself. He was comparable to Guha (Lord Kārttikeya). He was the exposer of all secrets in the world and of all quarrels.

He was the most accomplished of all the great sages. He was a great scholar well-versed in the Science of Music. This Brāhmaṇa had perfected (the art of) playing with (i.e. playfully provoking) the enmity (of people) like a fine art. He was like another Kali but a Brāhmaṇa.

He was the primordial speaker among Devas and Gandharvas of all the worlds. He had perfect control (over the sense-organs). He was a singer of the four Vedas. He sang (songs praising) the good qualities of Hari.

The Brāhmaṇa-Sage Nārada, the one always wandering in the world of Brahmā, joyously came to the city protected by Dharmarāja.

85-87. As noble-souled kings were seated there and great Gandharvas had occupied their seats, that lord of great sages came there in the course of his wanderings in all the worlds. Accompanied by sages, Nārada of very great brilliance came there.

On seeing the sage arrived, that (Lord) conversant with all the Dharmas, rose from his throne and proceeded towards him (to receive him).

88-89. Bowing down humbly and delightedly, (the king), conversant with Dharma, made his obeisance. He duly offered him a befitting seat. He offered *Argha* and *Madhuparka* along with (sweet) words (of welcome[1]) (*gām*). He honoured him with gems and other desired objects.

90-91. On receiving the adoration, the sage was satisfied. (Dharmarāja then asked:) "O illustrious sage, I hope you are quite all right and your penance is going on well. I hope that no wicked Daitya harasses the lord of heaven. O sage, O son of Brahmā, O storehouse of mercy, you are auspiciousness incarnate. You are bowed to by Suras and Asuras. You go everywhere and you know everything."

Nārada said:

92-95. With the grace of Brahmā, all is well with me now. O Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Dharma, O illustrious one, I hope you are happy along with your brothers. O great king, I hope your mind revels in piety and virtue. I hope you are happy along with your wives, sons, servants, horses and elephants. O son of Dharma, you do virtuously protect the subjects like your own bosom-born sons. What wonder is there? Indeed the subjects are blessed and contented. Manu has said that by protecting and sustaining men one will certainly produce Dharma. You will be the enjoyer (of the fruits) of those pious activities.

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1. This is more appropriate than offering a cow in the Assembly. Hence this translation of *gām* as 'speech, words'.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

96-98. The whole of my kingdom is happy by the contact of your feet. O illustrious one, I have become free from sins on having your sight. I am blessed. I am contented. I have discharged all my duties. I am fortunate in this world. As the son of Brahmā has come to my abode, I have become meritorious.

Where are you coming from, O Brāhmaṇa, O excellent sage? Is it for blessing the good ones? Or is it for any (other) specific purpose?

Nārada said:

99-103. O excellent king, I am coming from the presence of Śamana (Dharma). The divine story concerning Dharmāraṇya, the splendid mythological story that dispels all distress, was recounted by Vyāsa in the presence of Brahmā.

The divine story pertains to Dharmāraṇya. It dispels all troubles. By listening to it, one is liberated from the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, from all sins.

By listening devoutly to this story that destroys the three types of distress and that suppresses ten thousand (sins of) murder, the hard shall become soft. After listening to it, it was related to me by Dharmarāja.

The lord of immeasurable soul (*ameyātmā*) asked him about that story which delighted and interested (even) Dharma.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, be pleased to tell me the meritorious story concerning Dharmāraṇya with a desire for welfare of all the worlds.

Nārada said:

104. This is the time for bathing for us. I have no time for discourse. But, let this be heard. O king, I shall offer you this advice.

105. Māgha is the most excellent of all months for the purpose of holy bath, charitable gift etc. He who takes his holy bath in the month of Māgha, is liberated from all sins.

106. O king, go immediately to Gaṅgā now for the sake of your holy bath. O excellent king, the arrival of Vyāsa is to take place today.

107-109. O blessed one, ask him. He will recount to you the wonderful fruit and merit of visiting all the Tīrthas. He will narrate everything that is past, present or future, high, low or middling. He will tell them from *Itihāsa* (mythological texts). Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, will tell you everything concerning all ancient traditions of Dharmāraṇya.

Sūta said:

110. After saying thus, the son of Brahmā vanished there itself. When he had gone, that king began to sport along with his ministers.

111. In the meantime, the son of Satyavatī came there. Then Vidura informed the son of Pāṇḍu.

Sūta said:

112-115. On hearing that the sage had arrived, all were thrilled with delight. All of them including Bhīma stood up along with Dharma. (Yudhiṣṭhira) faced him with his head bowed down and rejoiced. Accompanied by his brothers, he prostrated before him like a log of wood. He duly worshipped him splendidly with *Madhuparka*. He made him sit on his throne and enquired about his health. Thereupon, the knower of Dharma made him recount the divine and meritorious story. At the end of the discourse he spoke these words to the tiger among sages.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

116-119. With your favour, O Brāhmaṇa, excellent stories have been heard by me. Duties during emergency, duties of the king, various pious activities leading to salvation, the virtuous rites prescribed in the Purāṇas, many kinds of holy *Vratas* (vows and observances), many Tīrthas and all shrines have been heard from you.

Now I wish to hear about the splendid story of Dharmāraṇya, on hearing which sin including the one of slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa perishes.

I wish to hear the details of all the Tīrthas situated in Dharmāraṇya.

By whom was this holy spot created? Why has this been created?

120. By whom has this been guarded and protected? At what time was it created? What things took place here before? Narrate this to me as I ask.

121. Narrate everything that happened, is happening and will happen in that holy spot. Tell (us) everything regarding the situation of the Tīrthas.

CHAPTER TWO

Yudhiṣṭhira's Queries

Vyāsa said:

1. Now I shall describe Moheraka[1] which is the sacred mark on the forehead of the damsel in the form of the Earth. It is (like) the water-basin round (the root of) the creeper of Lakṣmī and is beautiful on account of the aquatic sports of the Goddess of Speech.

2. You have asked well, O king; Dharmāraṇya excels Vārāṇasī very much, O excellent king. Listen very attentively.

3. All the Tīrthas are present there itself. Therefore, it is called Ūsara (arid land?). It is visited by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others as well as by Indra and others.

4. It is resorted to by the Protectors of the worlds, by Guardians of Quarters, by the Mother-goddesses, by the Śaktis of Śiva, by Gandharvas and celestial damsels performing Yajñas.

5. It is frequented by Bhūtas (Goblins), Vampires, by the spirits named Śākinīs and by the Presiding Deities of the planets. It is resorted to by Seasons, by Months, by Fortnights, by Suras and Asuras.

6. That is the primordial holy place which bestows all happiness. It is frequented by excellent sages performing diverse kinds of Yajñas.

7-10. O tiger among kings, it is haunted by lions, tigers, elephants, different kinds of birds, by cows, buffaloes, etc., by ducks, deer and boars. It is resorted to by various kinds of beasts of prey.

All those who meet with death there—be it even birds, insects,

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1 '*Noheraka*' in the text is a misprint for *Moheraka* (vide p. 2, note 1).

beasts, wild animals, aquatic creatures or those living on dry land, those who move about in the sky or on the earth, Ḍākinīs (witches) and Rākṣasas (demons)—attain permanent salvation along with a hundred and one generations (of their family) and then proceed to the world of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt about it.

11-12. He causes the redemption of his ancestors of ten generations preceding him and descendants of ten generations succeeding him. He who offers rice-balls there along with barley, grains of rice and gingelly seeds, with ghee, leaves of Bilva, Dūrvā grass with jaggery and water, shall redeem seven Gotras and one hundred and one generations of (his own) family.

13. That place is endowed with many kinds of trees. It is rendered very beautiful by creepers and bushes. It yields merit and is always endowed with fruits.

14. Dharmāraṇya is free from fear and enmity, O king. Cows play there along with tigers and cats along with mice.

15-20. Frogs sport with serpents and human beings with Rākṣasas. They stay fearlessly there on this earth. Dharmāraṇya is divine and full of great delight. It is holier than the holiest. Cuckoos perched among the bushes coo in a sweet note. They are being prevented by the female doves thinking that a person who is in meditation will be disturbed. The ruddy goose (Cakravāka) abandons his female partner and remains silent due to fear from it. The Cakora bird that imbibes the moonlight appears as though it observes *Naktavrata* (i.e. vow of taking food only at night). Sārikās (Turdus Salica?) recite the essence (of the sacred scriptures). Oh, how wonderful it is that God Śiva who bestows (the favour of) crossing the impassable ocean of worldly existence (Saṁsāra) enlightens Śuka [(1) Sage Śuka, (2) a parrot]!

Even if a person goes towards Dharmāraṇya lazily (casually) from his abode, he will attain merit superior to that of a horse-sacrifice at every step. Brāhmaṇas capable of blessing as well as cursing, live there.

21-22. Eighteen thousand (Brāhmaṇas) are engaged in meritorious deeds. Thirty-six thousand servants are the merchants on the earth. They are not born of the womb. They are endowed with devotion to Brāhmaṇas. They are supporters of Brāhmaṇas. They are of good conduct and conversant with Purāṇas. They are of pure intellect and virtuous. In heaven Devas speak in praise of the residents of Dharmāraṇya.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

23-29. When was the designation *Dharmāraṇya* given by gods? Why did it become holy on the earth? Why was it created? For what reason did it become a holy spot? Do tell me. How many were the Brāhmaṇas? By whom were they settled there formerly? Why were eighteen thousand settled there? In which family were these Brāhmaṇas, established in Brahman, born? They were adepts in all learnings. They were masters of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. They were proficient in Ṛg Veda. They were actively engaged in the study of Yajurveda. They were masters of Sāmaveda along with all its ancillaries. They were the most excellent among those conversant with Dharma. They were adepts in the three *Vidyās* (i.e. Vedas). They were engaged in penance. They were of auspicious conduct. They were eagerly devoted to the vow of truthfulness. They had become emaciated due to their monthly fasts and observances like Cāndrāyaṇa etc. They were of excellent conduct and were pious and devoted to the acquisition of sacred knowledge. How did they maintain themselves? Who supported them? O Sir, foremost among the eloquent ones, narrate all these from the very beginning. How is it that Dānavas, Daityas, evil spirits born of Bhūtas and Vetālas, Rākṣasas and Piśācas do not trouble them?

CHAPTER THREE

Indra's Fear

Vyāsa said:

1. O tiger among kings, may this story be heard. On hearing this auspicious legend of hoary past, one is undoubtedly absolved of all sins.

2. Once Dharmarāja performed a penance that could be hardly performed even by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others. He bore with patience heavy downpour of rains, scorching heat of the sun etc.

3-12. It was in the first Tretāyuga that he performed this penance, O king, for a period of thirty thousand years. He was seated at the root of an Aśoka tree in the middle of the forest. He was

steady and motionless. All his bones were intertwined with dry sinews. His blood was sucked up by millions of ants and other worms of the anthill (that grew around him?). The bones were bereft of flesh. The body of the sage was motionless like a crystalline stone. It was resplendent like a conch, Kunda flower, the moon, snow, the Mahāśaṅkha (treasure of Kubera). His life was sustained only due to his inherent vitality. It was as though he was protected by his own destiny to live long Indeed the fact that he was alive was indicated by the movement of his breath in exhalation and inhalation. The winking movement indicated the existence of life. The reddish brown tinge of the glittering eyes brightened the faces of the quarters. The forest region became faded as though kissed by a forest fire in the form of the fiery flames of his penance. The trees around were given a fresh lease of life by a downpour of nectar when the Śānti rites were performed by him and the holy water thereof was poured down. It was as though penance itself had assumed human form and begun to perform penance. It had entertained a sort of devotion without a specific form and free from any ulterior motive. He was surrounded by many fawns that wandered in groups. He was well protected by the animals of the forest, though they were terrifying due to their ferocious faces and roaring sound.

On seeing that formidable sage of this sort, gods including Indra approached Mahādeva, the bestower of freedom from fear to all. All those gods including Brahmā went to Kailāsa where Lord Śiva was seated in the shade of a Pārijāta tree along with Umā and where he used to be engaged in meditation.

13. Nandī, Bhṛṅgī, Mahākāla and other members of the great host of Gaṇas, Lord Skanda and Gaṇeśa (leader of the Gaṇas) and others were also present there.

The Devas including Brahmā stationed themselves in their respective places.

Brahmā said:[1]

14. Obeisance to you of infinite forms, O Nīlakaṇṭha. Bow to you (O Lord) of uncomprehended form, who are immortal and stand supreme in your Absoluteness.

1. The eulogy of Śiva in vv 14-25 represents Śiva as the Upaniṣadic Brahman. Hence the description of his Cosmic Form.

15. Repeated obeisance to you whose nature even the Devas do not understand. Obeisance to that Soul of Consciousness whom no words can (adequately) praise.

16. Obeisance to that glorious Brahman whom the Yogins visualise in the inner space of their heart in the form of a brilliant splendour while they are motionless during their contemplation.

17. Obeisance to that Kāla who is beyond all Time, who is the Supreme Puruṣa of his own will. Obeisance to the lord of the form of the three Guṇas, who has the form of Prakṛti.

18. Obeisance to the Lord who is Viṣṇu in his Sattva aspect, Brahmā in his Rajas aspect and Rudra in his Tamas aspect, the Lord who is the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction (of the universe).

19. Obeisance to the lord in the form of the intellect, who has the form of the Ego in three phases (according to the three Guṇas), who has the form of the five Tanmātras (the subtle elements), and who is in the form of the Prakṛti.

20. Repeated obeisance to the lord in his own form, who is of the nature of the five cognitive organs and who has the five forms of the elements like the Earth etc. Obeisance to you who are of the nature of the objects of sense.

21. Bow to the lord in the form of the Cosmic Egg; obeisance to the lord immanent therein. Obeisance to you of the form of the universe, both modern and ancient.

22. Obeisance to the lord of evanescent and permanent forms, to the lord of the existent as well as of the non-existent. Hail to thee, O lord of that form that is manifested through your own will with compassion for your devotees.

23. The Vedas are your breath exhaled and the Veda constitutes the entire universe. All the living beings constitute your feet and the firmament is your head.

24. The space issued forth from your navel; the realm of vegetation forms your hairs; the moon is born of your mind, O Lord, and the Sun from your eyes.

25. O Lord, you are all; everything is in you and whatever is praiseworthy (and the praise itself) are you alone. O Lord, the entire visible world is fit to be inhabited by you. Obeisance, obeisance to you again and again.

26-27. Having eulogized the Great Lord thus, all of them pros-

trated on the ground (in the process of obeisance) like a piece of log. The Lord then said:

Śaṁbhu, the great Lord said:

I am here to bestow boons; what do you wish? How is it that all the Devas with Bṛhaspati as their leader are anxious? O Brahmā, tell me the reason for your misery.

Brahmā said:

28. O Nīlakaṇṭha, the great lord, the bestower of freedom from fear, the destroyer of miseries, listen to our misery that I am going to narrate to you.

29. Dharmarāja, the righteous soul, performed a very difficult penance. I do not know what he wishes, maybe the most excellent position among the gods.

30. Hence, all those with Indra as their leader are frightened by his penance. For a long time, his mind has been dedicated unto your feet. O Lord of Devas, make him rise up (and ask him) whatever that Dharmarāja may be craving for.

Īśvara said:

31-33. There need be no fear from Dharma on your part. I am speaking the truth.

Thereupon all those Devas, the dwellers of heaven, stood up, circumambulated Rudra and bowed to him again and again. Accompanied by Indra, all those dwellers of heaven returned from Kailāsa and went to their respective places quickly.

34. Indra, the supreme lord of all powers, went to Sudharmā. He could get no sleep, no happiness, no tranquillity.

35-36. Then the lord and consort of Śacī became extremely worried and thought thus: 'I am faced with a great trouble. It is for usurping my place that he is performing this excessively difficult penance.' He called all the Devas together and spoke these words:

Indra said:

37. May all the Devas listen to the cause of my grief. Does Yama crave for what has been acquired by me with very great difficulty?

Looking at all the Devas, Bṛhaspati spoke thus:

Bṛhaspati said:

38. O Dwellers of Heaven, haven't you the ability to put up obstacles in his penance? May Urvaśī and others be sent for and deputed there.

39. He went to every door in order to call them. Fetching them he reached the Assembly Hall quickly.

40-43. When they came, Indra spoke: "A very important work has fallen to our share. May all of you hasten to the Dharmāraṇya forest where Dharmarāja has been performing a penance very difficult to be performed. By means of your seductive charms, smiles and glances, songs and dances tempt that sage who is performing penance so that he may have a great fall from the high pedestal of penance."

On hearing these words of their lord, the groups of celestial damsels consulted one another. Urvaśī, the foremost among the celestial damsels, set off to Dharmāraṇya.

44-47. Devas eulogized her. They showered her with flowers. With the bands of Devas and Brāhmaṇas eulogizing her, Urvaśī started for the extremely sacred forest with great pleasure—the forest that was full of Bilva, Khadira and Arka trees as well as Kapittha and Dhava (*Anogeissus latifolia*) trees. No sun shone there It was fully enveloped in darkness. It extended to many Yojanas. It was desolate. It was full of lions and such other wild and ferocious animals; it was covered with many trees in full bloom and splendid green grass.

48. The vast forest was reverberating with the sweet chirping sound of birds, rich with the cooing of male cuckoos and a continuous noise created by crickets.

49. It was covered with full-grown trees with extensive pleasant shade. The whole surface of the region was covered with trees and excellent splendour.

50. In that forest, there was no tree without flowers or fruits. None of them was thorny. There was no tree not crowded with bees.

51. All the trees were profusely bedecked with flowers echoing with the chirping sounds of birds. The forest was covered with trees bearing the flowers of all seasons and having pleasing shades.

52. Trees with branches burdened with flowers were blown over by the wind. They shed beautiful and variegated shower of flowers all round.

53. Well-developed trees scraping the sky and full of fragrant flowers shone there, with birds of sweet voice.

54. Bees of sweet sound in their eagerness to get honey perched themselves on the tender sprouts and clustering flowers and hummed sweetly.

55-58. While seeing many regions beautified with fragrant sprouts, abounding with many grottos and bowers that delighted everyone's mind there, she became extremely delighted. That forest shone much due to the fully blossomed trees with their intertwining branches appearing like the flagposts of mighty Indra.

The gentle wind that wafted the pollen dusts of the flowers was pleasingly cool and fragrant. Thus she saw then a forest endowed with such qualities as these.

There she saw the holy river Yamunā too that originated from the Sun.

59-62. There she saw a very excellent and pleasing hermitage surrounded by sages and Vālakhilyas.

(It was surrounded by) naked sages imbibing the smoke from many receptacles of fire that were suspended from the branches of trees. Wild animals became gentle as domestic pets.

There (giving up their natural animosity) cats became of Sāttvic nature with mice, mongooses with serpents, and lions with fawns of the deer. They played with each other as if they were brothers (born of the same mother). God Indra saw that forest from a distance and spoke:

Indra said:

63-67. This Dharmarāja is engaged in a fierce penance. He is an aspirant for my kingdom. Hence your endeavour must be centred here. All of you create obstacles in his penance That is my command. All of you do go there.

On hearing the words of Indra, Urvaśī, Tilottamā, Sukeśī, Mañjughoṣā, Ghṛtācī, Menakā, Viśvācī, Rambhā, Pramlocā, Cārubhāṣiṇī ('Sweet-voiced one'), Pūrvacitti, Surūpā (of exquisite form) and Anumlocā, Yaśasvinī (of great renown)—these and many others who were present there glanced at one another with fear and suspicion and

thought thus: 'Yama and Indra—both these are your ultimate resort.'

68-69. Thinking thus in diverse ways, O Bhārata (descendant of Bharata), (there was) the most excellent one among those celestial damsels, named Vardhanī who was bedecked in all ornaments. She spoke to Urvaśī, "O lady of auspicious countenance, why do you worry?" "In order to realize the aims and aspirations of the Devas, O Chastiser of Pāka, I shall so endeavour with the strength of my beauty as well as magical powers, that the duty (Dharma) of my class is carried out."

Indra said:

70-75. Excellent! O glorious Vardhanī, O virtuous one, O gentle lady, hurry up. O lady of slender belly, accomplish our task. O lady of excellent eyebrows, no one other than you is capable of protecting (the interest of) the brave ones.

Saying "So it shall be", she went to that place where Dharmarāja was present, making her form attractive to mind by bedecking it with valuable ornaments. She was beautified with saffron, eye-lotions and ornaments. Besides flowers and garments, she dazzled brilliantly with tinkling ornaments round her waist and anklets in both the feet. She had many varieties of ornaments. She had applied sandalpaste upon her body. The auspicious lady wore many flower garlands and was clad in silken garments. Taking up a beautiful Vīṇā in her hand, the lady beautiful in every limb, performed an exquisite dance consisting of three varieties.

76-77. The sound of the Vīṇā blended sweetly with the loud and sweet sound of the flute. The modulation and intonation of the musical sound mingled sweetly with the twang of the stringed instruments. Although Lord Dharmarāja had perfect control over himself, O Prince, he became agitated in mind and disturbed.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

78-80. O holy Brāhmaṇa, foremost among those who have realised Brahman, it is really surprising to note how there came a break in the penance of one who had realized Brahman. The earth is established in Dharma; the heaven, the nether worlds, the moon, the sun, the waters, the wind, the fire, nay the entire world is

established in Dharma. O lord, how did he get upset? Tell me the truth.

Vyāsa said:

81. The downfall of the courageous is the cause of a fall in the real hell. The *Yonikuṇḍa* (i.e. the pit of the vaginal canal) is like the hell Kuṁbhīpāka on the earth.

82-83. Women bind tightly even lofty-minded persons by means of ropes in the form of their loving glances. They are, as it were, beaten senseless by means of big batons in the form of their breasts. Rendering them senseless, they quickly make them fall in hell, O excellent king. Woman has been created thus as the stupefier and enticer of all beings.

84-87. As long as the amorous woman is not present to direct view like a trapping net, so long there can be steadiness of the mind, learning and truthful nature, even in the case of broad-minded persons.

As long as one does not see face to face a fickle-minded fawn-eyed damsel, so long there can be progress of penance, liberal-mindedness, sympathetic attitude, control of the senses, adherence to learning and steadfastness of holy rites, as well as general purity, and right behaviour.

As long as one is not fettered and toppled by means of the noose in the form of an amorous woman, so long there can be veneration for mother, father, brother or friends, and the sense of shame and fear and the ability to keep up good conduct are manifested and knowledge, wisdom, liberal-mindedness and power have their hold.

CHAPTER FOUR

Dharmāraṇya Established as a Holy Place

Vyāsa said:

1. Henceforth, I shall narrate the acts of Dharmarāja, on hearing which one becomes free from the fear of the messengers of Yama.

2-3. That Vardhanī, the most excellent one among the celestial damsels, was seen by Dharmarāja. (He thought:) 'Who is this beautiful lady of exquisite limbs in this great forest? This forest is devoid of human beings. It is extremely terrible due to lions and tigers.' Realising that it was extremely mysterious, Dharmarāja spoke thus:

Dharmarāja said:

4-8. Why do you move alone in this forest devoid of people, O respectable lady? Where have you come from? O lady of excellent beauty, whose wife are you? O beautiful lady, whose daughter are you? You are indeed very beautiful and auspicious in form. Are you a human being, a Gandharva woman, a goddess, a Kinnarī, an Apsaras, a Yakṣiṇī, a sylvan nymph, a demoness or a Khecarī ('one that moves in the sky')? Tell me whose wife you are. Tell me the truth, O lady of exquisite eyebrows.

The son of Sun-god (further) said:

What do you wish? O fair one, what is it that you have to do? Whatever you may wish, O beautiful lady, I shall grant you your desired object.

Vardhanī said:

9. It is in Dharma (righteousness) that everything mobile or immobile is established, O lord. That Dharma is an act difficult to accomplish. O sinless one, why do you do it?

Yama said:

10-13. O beautiful young lady, I wish to see the real form that Īśāna has. I am performing this penance to see the real form of Śaṅkara in the company of Śivā. This is my ambition that I will (thereby) attain fame and happiness. I am, therefore, doing this difficult act (penance) so that my renown shall last for Yugas and Yugas—nay for Kalpas and Mahākalpas. It is for this reason, O fair lady, that the great penance is being performed by me.

Why have you come, O fair lady? Tell me truly. What is to be done by you? What is the reason thereof? It behoves you to tell (me) the truth.

Vardhanī said:

14-15. It is of your penance that the Lord of heaven is afraid. I have been directed by him to this place with a desire for causing disturbance in your penance. I have been sent to the presence of Hari (i.e. Yama), O illustrious one, by Hari (Indra) who is afraid of losing his throne. It is the truth that I am telling.

Sūta said:

16. The son of the Sun-god was pleased at these truthful words. He told her, "I am highly blessed, a bestower of boons. Let me know (your desired boon).

17. I am Yama ('The Restrainer') unto all those beings who carry on evil activities. I am (available) in the form of Dharma ('The Righteous One') unto all those men who have attained mastery over their selves.

18. O fair lady, the foremost one among the celestial damsels, I, Dharma, shall give unto you everything that is very difficult to get. You just ask for all that."

Vardhanī said:

19. O lord who are the foremost among righteous ones, give unto me for the sake of the good of all the worlds, a permanent position in the abode of Indra, which is always a delightful place.

Yama said:

20. Let it be so. Further, ask quickly for another boon as well. Delighted by your song, I shall grant you another boon also.

Vardhanī said:

21-23. O lord of great intellect, let there be, in this holy place, a sacred Tīrtha well-known and named after me, that will destroy all sins. Whatever is offered in fire there, or given away in charity or performed as penance or recited as a Mantra, shall bring about everlasting benefit.

One who resorts to the lake Vardhamāna for five days, may his ancestors become pleased on being offered a daily libation of water.

After saying to her, "So it shall be", Dharma became silent. She

circumambulated Dharma thrice, bowed down to him and went to heaven.

Vardhanī said:

24. O lord of Devas, do not be afraid of Yama, the son of Lord Sun. He aspires only for a personal benefit and performs his penance for the sake of righteous renown.

Vyāsa said:

25-27. Vardhanī of glorious countenance was honoured by Śakra. (He said,) "Well done! Well done! O illustrious one, the task of Devas has been accomplished by you. O fair one, you will be free from fear for ever and live happily. You will attain renown, happiness and gracious glory."

The Devas too said to her "So be it" with a mind highly delighted due to the prospect of fearlessness. Bowing to Indra, she went to her own auspicious abode.

Sūta said:

28. O great king, after the departure of the celestial damsel, Dharma resumed his arduous penance that caused great anxiety unto the entire universe.

29. In the month of Śukra (May-June), when the sun blazed brightly, he performed the *Pañcāgni* ('standing amidst five fires') penance, very difficult for even gods to perform.

30. Thereafter, when a hundred years elapsed Antaka (Yama) resorted to silence. He remained motionless like a wooden statue and was covered up by many anthills.

31-32. Many kinds of birds built their nests therein. Then remembering the Lord of Devas, the praiseworthy Consort of Umā, he undertook an observance which was never seen anywhere, O king.

Thereupon Devas along with Gandharvas and Yakṣas became agitated in their minds and they again came to the top of Kailāsa, to the vicinity of Śiva.

The Devas said:

33. O great Lord Śrīkaṇṭha, Lord of the universe, save us, save us. Do save us, O lord of the past and the future. Protect us,

O Bull-emblemed Lord. O lord of compassion, you are really merciful. O Śaṁkara, remove all obstacles and fears.

Īśvara said:

34-35. O Devas, by whom has an offence been committed against you? By whom have you been dishonoured? Is it in the human world or in heaven? Is it in the region of serpents? Tell me quickly. Do not delay. With this trident or the skull-topped club or the Pāśupata missile, I shall kill him in a fight. Tell me quickly the cause of your visit to this place.

The Devas said:

36-38. O lord of Devas, O ocean of compassion, O delighter of the universe! We have no fear now from human beings, nor from serpents nor from Devas or Dānavas. It is certain that Pretanātha (Yama) of very huge form is tormenting himself very terribly for personal ends in the human world, O great lord. He exerts himself by means of a terrible penance. Hence, O Sadāśiva, all of us Devas are agitated. We have sought refuge in you. Do whatever you think fair.

Sūta said:

39. On hearing the words of the Devas, the Bull-emblemed Lord mounted his vehicle, the bull. He donned his charming coat of mail and took up his weapons and went to that place where Dharma was staying.

Īśvara said:

40-41. O Dharma, my mind is delighted by this penance. Tell me the boon you wish to have. Oh, tell me the boon. (He continued.) I shall grant unto you just now whatever you wish to have, whatever desire you may have in your mind or whatever you request.

Sūta said:

42. On seeing Lord Maheśvara who was speaking thus, O king, he came out of the anthill, joined his palms in reverence and eulogized the lord of the worlds, the destroyer of foes, by means of pure words of prayer.

Dharma said:[1]

43. Obeisance to you, the Lord. Obeisance to you, Yoga embodied. Obeisance to you of the form of brilliance. Bow to you, O Blue-necked One.

44. Obeisance to you who favour those who meditate on you. Obeisance to you who can be approached through devotion. Hail to you in the form of Brahmā. O Lord in the form of Viṣṇu, obeisance to you.

45. Obeisance to the gross one and to the subtle one. Obeisance to one in the form of the minute atom. Obeisance to you who can assume any form as you please. Obeisance to the lord who are the cause of creation, maintenance and dissolution (of the universe).

46. Hail to the eternal one, to the gentle one, to Mṛḍa and to Hari. Obeisance to you, the heat, and to the cool-rayed one.

47. Obeisance to you in the form of creation. Obeisance to you, O protector of the world. Obeisance to Ugra, the terrible. Obeisance to you of tranquil form.

48. Obeisance to you of infinite forms, of cosmic form. Obeisance to one whose limbs (entire body) are smeared with ash. Obeisance to you, O Moon-crested Lord. Obeisance to the Five-faced Lord. Obeisance to you, O Three-eyed One.

49. Obeisance to you (who are) adorned with serpents; obeisance to you who wear the Kakṣāpaṭa (i.e. garment tucked under the legs to cover nakedness). Obeisance to the destroyer of Andhaka, to the remover of the sins of Dakṣa. Obeisance to you who have burnt Kāma. Hail to you, the foe of the three Puras.

50-53. I have uttered forty names. One should read them or listen to them three times everyday with (physical and mental) purity. Even if he were to be a killer of cows, an ungrateful fellow, a drink-addict, a defiler of the preceptor's bed, a slayer of a Brāhmaṇa, robber of gold or an illegitimate husband of a Śūdra woman, or a sinner and killer of women and children, a person who utters lies, a bad-charactered one, a thief, one who carnally

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1. The prayer of Śiva in vv 43-49 contains forty names of Śiva. Śiva is equated with the Upaniṣadic Brahman. Hence he possesses contradictory qualities.

Since the days of the Rudrādhyāya in *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* a series of names (epithets) became a traditional way of worshipping a deity, be it Śiva, Viṣṇu or the river Gaṅgā. The efficacy of reciting these 40 epithets of Śiva is given in vv 50-53.

approaches another man's wife, one who scandalises others, one who hates others or one who deprives others of their means of livelihood, a perpetrator of prohibited deeds, one who destroys what is done by others, a hater of Brāhmaṇas, a base Brāhmaṇa or any other sinner, he becomes free from all sins and goes to Kailāsa.

Sūta said:

54-55. Eulogizing thus with great devotion and bowing down his head frequently Dharmarāja prayed to the Lord.

Satisfied thereby, Śaṁbhu said these glorious words: "O highly blessed one, ask for any boon, whatever may be the desire in your mind."

Yama said:

56-58. If you are delighted, O lord of Devas, be compassionate towards me. O illustrious one, create the three worlds including mobile and immobile beings in such a way as this region becomes well-known in the world after my name.

May it be impregnable and indestructible, holy and destructive of sins. O great lord, O Bhava, if you are pleased with me, make this region like this.

O king, then that place was given to him and rendered equal to Kāśī. After giving it, he said again, "O excellent one, choose another boon."

Dharma said:

59. It you are delighted, O lord of Devas, do a favour to me, O illustrious one, and create the three worlds including mobile and immobile beings in such a way that I become famous in every age.

Īśvara said:

60. Say, O Kīnāśa (Yama), I shall do everything as desired by you. I am delighted by your penance. I shall grant you any boon desired by you.

Yama said:

61-62. O Lord Śaṁkara, if you decide to grant me what I wish

remain by my name in this great holy region for ever. O great lord, see that it gets a great renown in all the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings, by the name Dharmāraṇya."

Īśvara said:

63. This shall always become known as Dharmāraṇya in all the ages. It will become known by your name. Is there anything else? I shall grant it too.

Yama said:

64-68. Let this excellent holy place bearing my name extend to two Yojanas. Let it be sacred unto all living beings and be a permanent place for attaining liberation.

Be they flies or worms, animals or birds, locusts, evil spirits or vampires, Piśācas, serpents or demons, men or women, if they die in my holy place called Dharma, let them attain perpetual salvation.

Lord Śarva (Śiva) said, "It will be so."

The Devas including Brahmā showered flowers and became highly delighted. Divine drums were beaten. Eminent Gandharvas sang. Sacred winds blew and groups of celestial damsels danced.

Sūta said:

69-70. Sadāśiva who was propitiated by Yama with great devotion spoke these highly pleasing words to that lord: "O dear one, allow me to go back ere long to the excellent mountain Kailāsa with a desire for the benefit of the Devas."

Yama said:

71. O Maheśvara, it does not behove you to leave off my holy place. O lord, it is far superior even to Kailāsa by your own words.

Śiva said:

72-73. What is said by you is indeed well and good. It is but proper for me to stay here with a part of mine. Your pure and holy region has not at all been abandoned by me. The great Liṅga here will be known after me as Viśveśvara.

* * *

After saying thus, the great lord vanished there itself.

74-75. Then that wonderful Liṅga appeared there in accordance with the words of Śiva. On seeing that (Liṅga) springing up as the name was uttered, the excellent Suras created their own respective Liṅgas in Dharmāraṇya. The Liṅgas of the respective Suras became famous by their respective names.

Sūta said:

76. The Liṅga installed by Dharma is reputed as Dharmeśvara. By remembering and worshipping it, one is absolved of all sins.

77. The Absolute Brahman that can be comprehended only by Yogins and that is immanent in everyone's heart, has a Liṅga established for it and it is called Svayaṁbhuva.

78-80. By worshipping Bhūtanātha ('the lord of the living beings') people become rid of ailments. Thereafter he created the beautiful tank called Dharmavāpī.

He brought water from ten million sacred places and let it out into that tank. It assumed the form of Yamatīrtha. It is highly pleasant to take a holy dip there. It is also intended for the holy bath of gods and of the sages of sublimated souls. By taking the holy bath and drinking the water thereof, one is rid of all sins.

81. If a man takes his holy bath in Dharmavāpī and visits Śiva called Dharmeśvara, he is released from all sins. He will never have the occasion to enter the womb of any mother.

82-84. After the holy dip there, one should offer water libation to Yama for the sake of the annihilation of the evil in the form of ailments, as well as for the cessation of the evil in that of pain together with uttering these (following) names. "Obeisance to Yama, the lord of Dharma, to Mṛtyu (god of Death), to Antaka (the destroyer), to Vaivasvata (the son of Sun), to Kāla (Time), to Dadhna, to Parameṣṭhin (Supreme Being), to Vṛkodara (wolf-bellied one), to Vṛkka (averter of disease), to Dakṣiṇeśa (lord of the South). O Citra (one of diverse nature), O Vaicitra (wonderful being), obeisance to thee, to Nīla (Blue one), to Citragupta."

If a man offers water libation along with Akṣatas (raw rice grains) to Yama in Dharmavāpī, he will not have any calamity.

85-88. Different kinds of fever such as the one occurring once in (every) three or four days, or those which affect periodically and fevers with (an attack of) chillness will never afflict those who have their minds inclined thus. Nor the evil spirits such as Revatī

etc. and malevolent Planets, or Ḍākinī, Śākinī etc. will trouble him.

He will be prosperous with plenty of wealth and grains. His family flourishes always, if a person, with his sense-organs under control, takes his bath properly and worships Bhūteśvara and recites the Rudra Mantras with all their ancillaries. He shall be rid of the bad effects of ailments. It is laid down in *Smṛtis* that men should perform Śrāddha rites there on the new-moon day, on Mondays, on the days of *Vyatīpāta* and *Vaidhṛti Yoga* (special planetary positions), on *Saṁkrānti* (days of transit of the Sun) as well as on eclipse days.

89. Even if a man performs Śrāddha for a thousand years, the Manes shall reject it and partake of the water libation mixed with gingelly seeds offered (at this sacred spot) by a well-known man.

90. Offering of balls of rice (to Pitṛs) at Gayā twenty-one times leads to the same everlasting benefits (satisfaction) to Pitṛs if they are offered only once at Dharmeśvara.

91. The well-known sacred tank Dharmavāpī that serves as a flight of stairs unto heaven, is situated on the west of Dharmeśa, a little away from Viśveśvara.

92-93. It was built formerly by Dharma, the righteously inclined one, for Śiva. If one takes one's holy bath there and drinks the water thereof and offers libations to the Manes and gods, they become pleased.

If a man offers a ball of rice (even) of the size of a leaf of Śamī (*Mimosa suma*) in the highly sacred tank Dharmavāpī, he shall never have rebirth.

94. There is no doubt about this, O king, that he is released from the hells called Kuṁbhīpāka, Mahāraudra, Raurava and Andhatāmisraka.

Sūta said:

95. An excellent person should offer water libations for a year at Dharmavāpī. There may be changes in the seasons, months and fortnights.

96. By the water libations at the tank, the Manes, viz. Barhiṣads, Agniṣvāttas, Ājyapas and Somapas, attain the highest satisfaction.

97. There are many holy spots leading to salvation, such as Kurukṣetra, cities such as Ayodhyā and (lake like) Puṣkara etc.

98-102. All these are similar (in power) but Dharmakūpa (i.e. Dharmavāpī) shall be superior. Mantras, Vedas, Yajñas, holy rites

and religious gifts become everlasting, O lord of men, when offered there.

The rites of *Abhicāra* (black magic) as well as others mentioned in Atharvaveda become effective on being performed there, O excellent one among kings. The sacred place Ādi-Tīrtha is resorted to by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśvara. The holy spot Susaumya too is resorted to by Brahmā and others.

Fruits are derived (if holy rites are performed) all through the Yuga in Kṛtayuga; for five hundred thousand years in Tretāyuga; for a hundred thousand years in Dvāpara and for one day in Kaliyuga.

Thus, O Brahmā, I have narrated the origin etc. of the holy forest Dharmāraṇya. The benefit thereof is narrated by Dvaipāyana.

Sūta said:

103. Henceforth, I shall narrate the statement of Dharma that is highly pleasing. It was for the sake of the Devas that he spoke this authoritatively.

Dharma said:

104-109. Even in this holy spot, some people confused by Viṣṇu's Māyā do perform evil acts such as adultery, theft of gold etc. One who does these and other evil acts, goes to hell.

Sins committed elsewhere perish in Dharmāraṇya; but a sin committed in Dharmāraṇya becomes fixed as though with adamantine cement.

Like merits sins also, the good and the evil alike increase daily for hundreds of years. The holy spot fulfils the desires of those who crave for things, grants salvation to Yogins and success (or supernormal powers) to Siddhas for ever. One who has no son gets sons; the poor becomes rich.

This holy narrative formerly narrated by Dharma, gives the merit of gifting a thousand cows if a man or a woman listens to it or recites it (to others) devoutly. In the end he or she goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER FIVE

Good Conduct

Vyāsa said:

1. Henceforth, I shall recount all religious rites to be performed by a man staying in Dharmāraṇya, while carrying out the duties of a householder.

2-3. Brāhmaṇas of pure noble birth who were born in Dharmāraṇya number eighteen thousand and are specially created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. They are Brāhmaṇas of pure, good conduct and are the foremost among those who know Brahman. One is rid of all great sins merely by their sight.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

4. O son of Parāśara, O noble lord, describe practices of good men (*Śiṣṭas*) unto me. One acquires righteousness through good conduct. One attains all benefits through good conduct. One derives glory and prosperity through good conduct. Therefore, kindly proclaim to us (what constitutes) good conduct.

Vyāsa said:

5-6. Immobile beings, worms and insects, aquatic beings, birds, animals and men are to be considered (more and more) righteous in this order. Suras (gods) are more righteous than these. The latter ones are a thousand times more righteous than the former ones. All these noble beings can attain salvation by ridding themselves of sins.

7. Among the four categories of beings animals are very much superior. Among animals, all those who subsist by their intellectual capacity are superior.

8-11. Human beings are superior among the intelligent beings. Vāḍavas (Brāhmaṇas) are superior among them. Scholars are superior to ordinary Brāhmaṇas. Persons who are informed of their (religious) duties are superior to scholars. Persons who perform (sacred) rites are superior to such informed intelligent persons. Persons devoted to Brahman are superior to those who perform religious rites.

O descendant of Bharata, no one else is superior to them (devotees of Brahman) in all the three worlds. They revere one another due to their special proficiency in penance and learning. Since the

Brāhmaṇa is created by Brahmā as the supreme lord of all living beings, it is only the Brāhmaṇa who deserves everything existing in the entire universe and none else. It is only the one whose conduct is pure that deserves everything and not one who deviates from it.

12-14a. Hence a Brāhmaṇa should always be a person of good conduct. O sage, learned men know good conduct[1] as being the source of all righteousness--that conduct which men of excellent intellect, men devoid of (misplaced) love and (unwarranted) hatred, perform regularly.

Even if a man is bereft of all good characteristics, he may live for a hundred years if he is careful in following good conduct and is faithful and free from jealousy.

14b-19a. Without the slightest lethargy, one should follow the source of righteousness i.e. the norms of good conduct and perform one's respective duties as prescribed by Śrutis and Smṛtis.

A man addicted to evil deeds in this world deserves to be treated with contempt. He is sure to be assailed by ailments. He will not live long. He will be extremely miserable for ever. That rite which leads to dependence on others, should be avoided. That which is within one's capacity should be pursued, because one who is dependent on others is miserable for ever, but one who is self-dependent is happy. If the inner soul (conscience) is elated and happy on the performance of a rite, that rite should be performed and not one that goes against it. *Niyamas* and *Yamas* have been proclaimed as Dharma in its entirety. Hence one who wishes to practise Dharma should endeavour to pursue them only.

19b-26. The ten *Yamas*[2] are: truthfulness, forbearance, straight-

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1. *Sadācāra*: When conflict arises due to different statements of Śrutis, Smṛtis and actual practice of the Śiṣṭas (learned and respectable people), Manu says that the path followed by one's ancestors should be followed:

yenāsya pitaro yātā, yena yātāḥ pitāmahāḥ /
tena yāyāt satām mārgaṁ tena gacchan na riṣyate // (Manu IV.178)

Kumārila quotes this with approval with the proviso that this ancestral usage is not against express Vedic Texts and is followed by Śiṣṭas under the belief that it is part of Dharma (*Tantravārtika*).

2. According to V.S. Apte, *Yama* is 'a great moral or religious observance' while *Niyama* is 'a lesser vow not so obligatory as Yama'. *Yamas* are ten but their names are given differently: Yāj.3.313 enumerates "celibacy, mercy, forebearance, charity, truth, non-violence, non-stealing, sweetness, non-possession." Patañjali gives a list of five. Similarly *Niyamas* are ten in number and worded differently. The verse here (20b-21a) is an echo of *Atri Smṛti*.

forwardness, contemplation, avoidance of cruelty, non-violence, control, cheerfulness, sweet temper and gentleness.

The ten *Niyamas* are: cleanliness, regular bath, penance, liberal gifts, silence (as a vow), sacrificial rites, study of Vedas, sacred observances, fasting and suppression of sexual impulse.

One shall become successful everywhere after conquering these six enemies: lust, anger, pride, delusion, jealousy and covetousness.

One should acquire righteousness slowly and steadily like the white ant that steadily builds up the anthill. One should abstain from inflicting injury on others as it is adverse to our interests in the other world. If properly taken care of, Dharma alone should be of help (to us) hereafter.

Every living being (considers himself) more (important) than his father, mother, son, brother, wife and kinsmen. A living being is alone when he is born or when he dies. He singly (i.e. without sharing with others) enjoys his merits and suffers the consequences of his evil deeds. When the body disintegrates after being left alone like a clod or a piece of wood, the kinsmen turn their faces and go back. But Dharma (alone) shall follow the dying person who goes ahead. Hence one should accumulate Dharma which helps both here and hereafter.

27. After securing Dharma that helps, one shall go across the unfordable (abyss of) darkness. An intelligent man should always cultivate close association with excellent ones alone.

28. After abandoning the (company of) mean and ignoble ones, one should lead one's family to prosperity. One should always be in contact with the best and excellent ones avoiding vile persons. Thus a Brāhmaṇa attains supremacy and by following the contrary course, he attains Śūdrahood.

29. The Destroyer (god of Death) harasses a Brāhmaṇa who habitually neglects study (of Vedas), who transgresses the code of good conduct, who partakes of the food offered by evil and wicked persons and who is (always) lazy.

30. Hence a twice-born one should always endeavour for the practice of good conduct. Even sacred shrines and holy spots desire association of a man of good conduct.

31. The later half of the *Yāma* (*Yāma* = a period of 3 Hrs.) towards the close of the night is called *Brāhma* period. A wise and intelligent person should always get up then and reflect on

what is beneficial to him.[1]

32-37. At the outset he should remember[2] the Elephant-faced Lord (Gaṇeśa) and then Īśa (Śiva) along with Aṁbā (Mother Divine). Then Śrīraṅga (Lord Viṣṇu) accompanied by Śrī (Goddess Lakṣmī), then Brahmā born of the lotus, all the Devas beginning with Indra, the Sages beginning with Vasiṣṭha, all the rivers beginning with Gaṅgā, all the mountains beginning with Śrīśaila, all the oceans beginning with the Milk Ocean, the lakes like Mānasa etc., parks beginning with Nandana, cows beginning with Kāmadhenu, trees beginning with Kalpavṛkṣa, minerals with gold as the chief one, celestial damsels with Urvaśī as the chief one and the devotees of Viṣṇu beginning with Prahlāda (should be remembered).

With a delighted mind a wise person should remember the feet of his mother which can be considered the most excellent of all sacred Tīrthas and meditate on his father and preceptors.

Thereafter, for answering the calls of nature, he should go towards the South-West direction. If it is a village he should go at least a hundred *Dhanus* (four hundred *Hastas,* one *Hasta* = 30 Cms) and (in cases of a town) four times that distance from a town.

38-40. He should cover the ground with grass and wrap up his head with a cloth. The sacred thread should be placed on the (right) ear while easing himself at dawn, dusk or during the day time. He should face the North.

At the time of evacuating the bowels or the bladder he should be silent. During the night he should face the South while answering the calls of nature. He should not stand, nor should he do so in the presence of Brāhmaṇas, cows and fire, nor against the wind.

He should not ease himself in a ploughed field or in a piece of ground served by streets. He should not look towards different directions, nor at the luminaries or the sky or the faeces.

41-44. After easing himself completely, he should hold the penis with his left hand and get up with caution. Avoiding clay infested with worms or full of pebbles or that dug out by mice or full of hairs or that has become spoilt by being spit on it, he should apply clay once at the anus and wash it out with water.

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1. VV 31 ff give the model Time Table to be observed daily.

2. VV 32-37 are collectively called *'Prātaḥsmaraṇa'*. It is psychologically important for retaining a happy and balanced mood throughout the day.

Thus he should wash his anus five times repeatedly with the left hand. Then mud should be applied thrice to each of the feet and hands until the bad odour and stickiness disappear. This mode of cleansing, the householder shall adopt. In the three stages of life beginning with *Brahmacarya* (the life of celibacy) this should be followed in descending order.

45-50. At night one should perform the cleansing act to the extent of only half of what is ordained for the day time. In another village (i.e. out of one's native village) half of the previous one will do and on the way (i.e. during travels) half of that. Half of that (be performed) in the case of sick persons. In the case of healthy individuals no deficiency (in the number of cleansing acts) should creep in.

A person may perform cleansing act thoroughly with the waters of all rivers or heaps of clay resembling mountains. Yet if he is mentally and morally depraved and vicious he will not become purified. Clay to be used in the cleansing act should be of the size of a succulent green Indian gooseberry (Embilic Myrobalan). All ghee offerings and morsels during the *Cāndrāyaṇa* atonement rite shall also be of this size.

At the time of bathing/washing/rinsing the mouth/sipping (*Upasparśa*) a householder should sit facing the North or the East comfortably on a clean ground. The water should be free from husk, coal, bones or ash. It should be very clean and pure. It shall be sufficient to reach up to the heart. He shall not be in a hurry at this time.

Brāhmaṇas should sip the water purified by means of his glance. It shall be *Brahmatīrtha* (holy water). A king should become purified by means of the water reaching the throat and a Vaiśya by means of the water reaching the palate.

51-52. Women and Śūdras become pure by mere touch (of water). A person making sound on the head, or with the throat, or remaining in water with the tuft of hair loose, or not washing both the feet, is considered impure even if he conducts the ceremonial sipping of water. After sipping water thrice for the sake of purity, he should purify the limbs.

53-54. He should wipe off the lips with the lower portion of the thumb. After touching the heart with water, he should touch the head with all (the fingers). With the tips of the fingers, he should touch the shoulders entirely with water. Although he might have

ceremonially sipped water, he should do so once again after traversing the street.

55-56. After taking bath, taking food and drinking water, at the beginning of an auspicious rite, after sleeping, changing clothes and seeing inauspicious things, after erroneously remembering impure things, one shall ceremonially sip water twice. He shall then become pure.

He should cleanse his teeth in the manner laid down in Dharmaśāstras (religious codes). Even if one ceremonially sips water, one is still impure, if one does not cleanse one's teeth.

57. The contact of a twig-brush and the teeth on the new-moon day, first lunar day, the sixth and the ninth lunar days and on Sundays, might burn the family up to the seventh generation.

58. If a twig-brush is not available or on the days when it is forbidden, one should gargle twelve times for the sake of the purity of the mouth.

59. A twig for brushing the teeth should have the thickness of the tip of one's small finger and twelve *Aṅgulas* (30 Cms. approximately) of length.[1] It should be green with the natural skin intact. It should not have any crack or fissure and should be free from decay.

60-61. One should bite off the twig inch by inch and chew it well, after (?) the daily morning bath especially in a sacred river or pool, for the sake of purity. It is only through the morning bath that our body which is always dirty, can become clean. By day as well as by night that dirt is excreted from our body through the nine outlets.

62-64. Authorities say that regular morning bath dispels even great sins. It is thus on a par with the holy rite of *Prājāpatya*. It increases enthusiasm, intellect, good fortune, beauty and wealth.

Regular morning bath removes sins and misfortunes, languor and impurity. It dispels (the effect of) bad dreams. It accords satisfaction and a flourishing state.

Defects and evils do not approach a person who bathes regularly every morning. Thus a regular morning bath has visible and invisible results. Hence one should practise it regularly.

65. Incidentally, O excellent kings(?), I shall recount the details of the rules regarding bath. They say that a bath following the

1. Cf. Viṣṇu Dh. S.61.16-17.

procedural rules, is hundred times more efficacious than ordinary bath.

66. One should bring excellent clay, Kuśa grass, sesamum seeds, cowdung and place them on a clean floor. Then one should ceremoniously sip water and perform the rite of holy bath.

67. One afflicted by bad Planets should tie up his tuft of hair and enter water. He should perform the rite of holy bath in accordance with the injunctions of his own branch of Veda.

68. After taking bath thus and having washed the clothes, one should wear washed clothes. After the *Ācamana* (ceremonious sipping of water), he should perform the morning *Sandhyā* (ritualistic prayer) with Kuśa grass in readiness at hand.

69. A Vipra (Brāhmaṇa) should keep his mind firmly under control and perform *Prāṇāyāma* (control of breath). He then instantaneously gets rid of all sins committed during the day and the night.

70. If he performs ten or twelve *Prāṇāyāmas* after controlling the mind, it is as good as a great penance performed by him.

71. Sixteen *Prāṇāyāmas* along with the *Vyāhṛti* and *Praṇava Mantras*, when performed everyday, will within a month purify even a person who has committed slaughter of a foetus.

72. Just as minerals taken out of the earth are burnt off by means of blowing (in the furnace), so also the evils committed by the sense-organs are burnt away through the control of breath.

73. The Supreme Brahman is one and imperishable. *Prāṇāyāma* is the greatest penance, O excellent king. There is nothing more sacred than the *Gāyatrī Mantra*.

74. Getting up early at dawn, one can dispel through *Prāṇāyāmas* the sin that one commits during the night physically, mentally and verbally.

75. Seated (for prayers) at the time of dusk, one dispels through *Prāṇāyāma* the sin that one commits during the day mentally, verbally and physically. He who performs prayers at dusk, dispels the sin committed during the day.

76. He who does not perform *Sandhyā* at dawn, he who does not perform *Sandhyā* at the time of dusk, must be excluded from all Brāhmaṇical rites like a Śūdra.

77. One should perform the daily (*Sandhyā*) rite in the vicinity of waters. Then he should perform duly the *Ācamana* rite (ceremonial sipping of water) in accordance with the injunctions.

78-79. Then he shall perform the *Mārjana* (wiping off) rite nine times repeating the three Mantras "*āpo hi ṣṭhā*" etc.[1] in this order dropping water on the ground, on the head, in the sky, (again) in the sky, on the ground, on the head, on the head, in the sky and on the ground. The word 'ground' indicates the feet, the word 'sky' indicates the heart and the 'head' is literally the head. This is the *Mārjana* rite.

80. This is called *Brāhma Snāna* (bath). It is superior to the other types of baths,[2] viz. *Vāruṇa*, *Āgneya*, *Vāyavya*, *Indra* and *Mantra Snāna*. He who takes the bath of *Brāhma* is pure within and without.

81-83. He becomes qualified for performing all types of holy rites such as the worship of gods etc. Are fishermen any the holier because they dive under water day and night? One who is defiled mentally and morally, cannot become pure, though one may take hundreds of baths. *Vibhūti* (holy ash) may sanctify further those who are mentally pure. Are donkeys proclaimed holy, if they are smeared with ash? He who is devoid of all types of impurities can claim to be one who has taken his holy dip in all sacred *Tīrthas*.

84. It is as good as he has performed hundred *Kratus* (sacrifices), if his mind is free from impurities. I shall now tell how the mind will be cleansed of impurities. Listen, O sage.

85. He can be (free from impurity) only when the Lord of the universe is pleased and not otherwise. Hence, one should resort to the Lord of Kāśī for the purity of the mind.

86-88. (He who resorts to Viśveśa) attains the Supreme Brahman after casting off this body.

After reciting the Mantra ending with *'drupada'* the devotee should take water in the hand. Knowing the injunction, he should perform the rite of *Aghamarṣaṇa* with the Mantra beginning with

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1. These are the three verse in RV X.9.1-3, Yāj Smṛ. I.22 and others prescribe the *Mārjana* with these three verses only.

2. Different kinds of *Snānas* (Baths):
   (1) Vāruṇa: Bath with water
   (2) Āgneya: Smearing the body with Bhasma
   (3) Vāyavya: Taking on the body the dust raised by cow's hoofs
   (4) Indra or Divya: Bath in rain-shower
   (5) Mantra: Sprinkling water with the verses *āpo hi ṣṭhā* etc. (RV X.9.1-3) (HD II.1.667-668)

'*ṛtaṁ ca*' etc.[1] If a learned man goes under water and recites the *Aghamarṣaṇa Mantra* three times, if anyone performs the rite of *Aghamarṣaṇa* in water or on the ground, all the sins of his shall perish like darkness at sunrise.

89-91. Standing up and repeating the Gāyatrī Mantra without its head, but having the *Praṇava* in the beginning and the *Mahāvyāhṛtis*, at the outset (*bhūr* etc. are called *Mahāvyāhṛtis*), the devotee should pour out three handfuls of water (*Vajrodaka*). Without that adamantine water (*Vajrodaka*), the demons called Mandehas annihilate the splendour of the Sun, like the mountains, that of the solar sphere. In order to help the Sun and destroy the demons Mandehas, a Brāhmaṇa should offer the three handfuls of water. If he does not do so, he too shall attain the state of a Mandeha.

92. In the morning the devotee should repeat the Mantras standing till the sun becomes visible. In the evening, he should repeat the Mantras sitting and continue till the stars are visible.[2]

93. (The exact) time should not be transgressed by a twice-born, if he desires his own good. Hence when sunrise/sunset is half complete, one should offer the *Vajrodaka* (three handfuls of adamantive water as mentioned above in vv. 89-90).

94. Even if the Sandhyā rite is performed duly, but it exceeds the prescribed time limit, it shall be fruitless. To cite an example, it shall be as fruitless as sexual intercourse with a barren woman.

95. If water is taken in the left hand and the Sandhyā rite is performed by Brāhmaṇas, it (performance of Sandhyā) is Vṛṣalī (Śudra woman). It is conducive to the pleasure of Rākṣasas.

96-100. He should then perform the *Upasthāna* (getting up reverentially) rite in accordance with the injunctions in his branch of Veda. The Saurī (Solar) Upasthāna of the Goddess Gāyatrī may be performed by means of a thousand, a hundred or ten repetitions of the Gāyatrī Mantra. The repetitions should never be less than ten. An upper limit of a thousand may be fixed (for the purpose of convenience). A hundred repetitions may be a via media. A twice-born who repeats Gāyatrī thus is never tainted by sins.

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1. *Agha-marṣaṇa* means 'driving out sins' One is to take water in his right palm, in the shape of cow's ear. Holding it near one's nose breathing out from the nose (all sins) on the water while muttering the three verses *'ṛtaṁ ca'* (RV X.190.1-3) one should cast that water to one's left on the ground.

2. Cf. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra* III.7.4-6; also Manu II.101.

The devotee should offer *Arghya* with water mixed with red sandalpaste as well as flowers and Darbha grass. The Mantras may be from the Vedas or Āgamas.

The three worlds are worshipped by that person by whom the Sun is worshipped.

The Sun who is worshipped gives sons, domestic animals and wealth. He dispels sickness, accords longevity and fulfils desires.

101. This Āditya (Sun) is Rudra; this Divākara (Sun) is Hari. This Ravi (Sun) is of the form of Gold; this Aryamā (Sun) is the three Vedas incarnate.

102-103. Thereafter, he should perform the *Tarpaṇa* rite in accordance with the injunctions of his own branch of Veda for all the Devas beginning with Brahmā and the Sages beginning with Marīci. He should offer libations with clean and pure water as well as sandalpaste, agallochum, camphor and fragrant flowers. He shall utter the word '*tṛpyantu*' ('May they be pleased').

104-107. The *Tarpaṇa* rite for human beings, Sanaka and others should be performed by a twice-born with the sacred thread worn as *Nivīta* (i.e. like a garland round the neck). He should keep the straight Darbhas betwixt the two thumbs.

The *Tarpaṇa* rite for the Manes and celestial beings such as Kavyavāṭ, Anala etc. should be performed with the sacred thread worn as *Prācīnāvīta*[1]. Darbhas shall be twice in number and should be mixed with gingelly seeds.

A Brāhmaṇa desirous of prosperity and welfare should never perform libations with gingelly seeds on Sundays, the seventh and thirteenth days of the bright half of the month and in the nights or dusks. If at all he performs, it should be with white gingelly seeds. He shall then be happy and contented. Afterwards he should perform the *Tarpaṇa* rite for fourteen Yamas repeating the names.

108-112. Thereafter he should joyfully perform the *Tarpaṇa* rite for his Manes after uttering the name of his Gotra (spiritual lineage) kneeling on his left knee. The water should be let down on *Pitṛ Tīrtha* (the portion between the thumb and the forefinger) and the devotee should restrain his speech.

Devas desire one handful[2] of water libation; Sanaka and others

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1 Wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder and under the left arm.

2. Holding it in open hollowed palms placed side by side and then offered.

desire two handfuls in succession. The Manes desire three handfuls in succession and women one handful after the other.

The libation for gods should be through the tips of the fingers; that for sages through the roots of the fingers. The libation for Brahmā shall be at the root of the thumb and that for Prajāpati in the middle of the hand.

They say that the portion between thumb and forefinger is the *Pitrya Tīrtha*. The Mantra should be: "May all the Devas, Sages, Manes and human beings beginning with Brahmā and ending with a blade of grass, be propitiated. May all the Manes including maternal grandfather and others also become propitiated." Other Mantras taken from the Vedas or the Purāṇas are also prescribed for recitation.

113. The devotee should perform the *Tarpaṇa* rite with all the ancillaries. It is pleasing to the Manes. Thereafter he should perform the ritualistic activities concerning the sacred fire and after that he should recite the Vedas.

114-115. Recitation of the Vedas is of five types: (1) *Svīkāra* (i.e. learning from the preceptor), (2) *Arthavicāraṇa* (pondering over the meaning), (3) *Abhyāsa* (repeated recitation), (4) *Tapas* (penance) and (5) Expounding to disciples (teaching). O excellent king, this morning routine of activities of the twice-born has been thus recounted. It is for the purpose of preserving what is acquired and for acquiring what is not yet acquired.

116. Or, one should get up early in the morning and finish the necessary routine (i.e. nature's call). After cleansing and ceremonial sipping of water, he should chew a twig for cleansing the teeth.

117. After washing clean all the limbs, he should perform the morning Sandhyā rite. He should try to understand the meanings of the Vedic texts and of the different Śāstra-texts.

118. He should teach well-disposed, intelligent disciples of good habits. He may approach a wealthy person for securing his *Yogakṣema* (welfare, getting the necessities of life etc.)

119. Thereafter, for the fulfilment of midday rites, he should take bath in the manner said before. A wise person should duly take his bath and perform the midday rites.

120. After worshipping the deities, he should perform the *Naimittika* rites (i.e. those rites which have to be performed on certain occasions). He should then kindle the sacred fire and perform the

Vaiśvadeva rite of offering food to all gods.

121-122. In the Vaiśvadeva rite, Niṣpāva (a kind of pulse), Kodrava (a species of grain), Māṣa (black gram), Caṇaka (Bengal gram), Kalāpa (a type of grass), foodstuff cooked in oil and all types of uncooked food containing salt should be avoided. One should avoid these also: cooked Āḍhakī (*Cajanus Indicus Spreng*) and Masūra (lentil), that from globular grains (?), the leavings of food eaten, stale food etc.

123. With Darbha grass in the hand, the devotee should perform the *Ācamana* rite and *Prāṇāyāma*. He should then recite the Mantra beginning with *pṛṣo divi* etc. and perform the rite of *Paryukṣaṇa* (sprinkling).

124. After sprinkling in a circle and spreading Kuśa grass twice, he should make the fire in his front with the *Rāpordhadeva Mantra* (?)

125. The wise devotee should worship Vaiśvānara (fire) with fragrant flowers and rice grains and perform the Homa rite in the manner mentioned in his own branch of Veda.

126. The following six are *Dharmabhikṣakas* ('mendicants for a religious cause'): (1) a wayfarer, (2) one who has lost remunerative jobs, (3) a student, (4) one who maintains his preceptor, (5) a recluse and (6) a person on a vow of celibacy.

127. A traveller is to be considered a guest if he is an *Anūcāna* ('student of Vedas') or *Śrutipāraga* ('one who has mastered the Vedas'). These two deserve the respect of householders who desire to attain the world of Brahmā.

128. Food given to even a Cāṇḍāla or a dog is never unproductive of good fruit. When a guest arrives one should not be wavering in the mind considering whether he is a deserving person or not.

129. Food is to be scattered outside for the sake of dogs, fallen persons, Cāṇḍālas, persons sick with sinful ailments (leprosy etc.), crows, worms etc.

130. "May the crows of the East, West, North-west, North and South-west accept this ball of rice offered by me on the ground."

131-134a. After offering the oblations to living beings thus, the householder should wait for the arrival of a guest for a period of *Godoha* (i.e. time required for milking a cow). Thereafter, he should enter the dining hall. Even before offering the oblation to the crows, he should perform the *Nityaśrāddha*. In this *Nityaśrāddha*

he should feed three, two or one Brāhmaṇa for the purpose of *Pitṛyajña*, he should take up water and offer it. *Nityaśrāddha* is one in which there is no (worship of) god nor is there any serious restriction. There is no Dakṣiṇā (monetary gift) (which is obligatory). It makes the giver and the receiver greatly pleased.

134b-136a. After performing the sacrifice to Manes (i.e. Śrāddha) he should be calm-minded and free from anxiety. He should occupy a seat free from all defects and enjoy food along with his children. He should apply fragrant scents; wear flower-garlands. He should wear two clean garments. Facing the East or the North, he should partake of food partaken by his Manes (i.e. food remaining after performance of Śrāddha).

136b-138. He should make the food (to be consumed) covered from above and below by means of a sip of water called *āpośaṇa* (when the food is served in the plate the eater is to sip some water and says "you are the seat of nectar—*amṛtopastaraṇamasi* "and at the end of the meals he sips water saying "You are the cover of nectar—*amṛtapidhānamasi*"). This is how food is covered from below and above.

After making the food 'non-naked' thus, the wise one should eat food. He should offer three pieces as oblation to Bhūtas (living beings) and offer water thereupon. He should hold Darbha grass in his hand and with a delighted mind he should sip water and offer the five offerings to five Prāṇas in the gastric fire in the stomach.

139. There can be no adverse effect in regard to one who takes food with the Darbha grass in his hand; no adverse effect arising from hairs, worms etc. Hence one should take food only with the Darbha grass in his hand.

140. Thereafter he should continue to take food silently. He should not rub the teeth with the bottom of the thumb of the right hand—the hand that has to be washed.

141. (Before the *Ācamana* rite, he should recite this Mantra:) "May everlasting result befall the residents of the nether worlds, in the hell named Raurava, the abode of inauspiciousness. Those residents crave even for the water left out after having been drunk."

142-145. The wise devotee should sip water ceremoniously once again and endeavour to become pure and get the mouth cleaned.

He shall spend the remaining part of the day by listening to Purāṇa and other activities. Then he should perform *Sandhyā* rite.

The *Sandhyā* rite performed at home is efficacious but that

performed in a cowpen is ten times more efficacious, that performed in a river is ten thousand times more efficacious, and that performed in the vicinity of Śiva is infinite times more efficacious.

The *Sandhyā* performed outside sanctifies one guilty of falsehood, bad odour of intoxicating beverages, sexual dalliance by day time and remaining with a Vṛṣala (Śūdra).

Thus the daily code of conduct has been explained generally. A Brāhmaṇa who conducts himself thus shall never suffer.

CHAPTER SIX

Norms of Good Conduct for Householders

Vyāsa said:

1. I shall duly recount how righteous conduct should be practised for the benefit of good householders.[1]

2. O dear one, a man feeds and nourishes the entire universe after becoming a householder. Thereby he wins the coveted worlds.

3-4. Manes, sages, Devas, human beings and other living beings, worms, insects, moths etc., birds and Asuras live on the householder. They eagerly look up to him to see if he would give water to them.

5. O dear one, this cow in the form of the three Vedas[2], is the support of everything. The universe is established in this. It is considered the cause (source) of the universe.

6. Ṛgveda is its back; Yajurveda constitutes its joints. Sāmans form its belly and udders. Iṣṭāpūrtas form its horns. The excellent hymns form its hairs.

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1. VV.1-4. The stage of a householder is highly praised by ancient Dharma Śāstra writers. Manu (III.77-78; VI.89-90) regards it as the support of all other Āśramas. Cf *Viṣṇu Dh.S.* (59.27-29), *Vasiṣṭha Smṛ.* VIII.17 and X.31. Mbh, *Śānti* 270.16-7 and *Vasiṣṭha Smṛ.* VIII.16 regard this Āśrama as the *'mother of all living beings'*. Gautama (III.1.35) states that householdership is the only Āśrama:

aikāśramyaṁ tvācāryāḥ pratyakṣavidhānād gārhasthasya /

Gautama and Baudhāyana regard other *Āśramas* as secondary.

VV 1-4 echo the view of ancient writers on Dharmaśāstra.

2. VV 5-12 describe the 'Cow-form' of the Vedas.

7. (Mantras for) *Śānti* (Peace) and *Puṣṭi* (Nourishment) are its faeces and urine. It is stabilised in its *Varṇas* (syllables) as its *Padas* (feet). It is worthy of being depended upon through the *Pāṭhas* ('modes of recitation'), namely *Pada*, *Krama*, *Jaṭā* and *Ghana*.

8. O dear son, Svāhākāra, Svadhākāra, Vaṣaṭkāra and Hantakāra constitute its four teats.

9-11. Devas always suck the teat of Svāhākāra; Manes, the teat of Svadhā. Sages and the lords of Devas, Bhūtas and Suras suck the teat of Vaṣaṭkāra and human beings that of Hantakāra. Thus, one should teach and maintain the study of the three Vedas everyday.

A person who breaks them is a perpetrator of endless sins. He will sink beneath the pitch darkness of the hell Andhatāmisra.

12. The man who worships at the proper time this cow (in the form of Veda) along with the celestial calves (viz.), Devas etc., deserves heavenly benefits.

13. Hence, dear son, Devas, sages, Manes and human beings as well as all living beings should be sustained by a man everyday, in the same manner as his own body.

14. Hence, with all faith, he should duly take his bath, remain pure and perform the *Tarpaṇa* rite for Devas, sages and Manes with water, at the end of *Brahmayajña*.

15. The man should worship Devas with fragrant flowers, propitiate Fire-god and offer *Balis* (oblations).

16. He should offer the oblations to night-prowlers and living beings through the sky (open space). Similarly, he should offer oblations to the Manes facing the South.

17-19. A householder should have all attention centred on them, and keep the mind well under control. Taking water duly, the intelligent man should offer at their respective places the oblation to deities indicating them by their names.

After giving the domestic *Bali* thus, the lord of the house should perform the *Ācamana* rite and remain watching at the door. He should await a guest for a period of an eighth part of a Muhūrta (i.e. six minutes).

20-24. On arrival, the householder shall duly honour the guest with *Arghya* and *Pādya* (materials of hospitality). They say that a *Brāhmaṇa* who is hungry, weary and poor and who has come abegging, is the true guest. He should be worshipped by learned

men in accordance with their capacity. The learned man should not question his conduct of life nor ask him about his study of Vedas. Whether he is of auspicious features or not, he should regard him Prajāpati (Brahmā) himself. Since he does not stay permanently, he is called *Atithi.*

He who offers him food and then takes his meal, is really a partaker of nectar. If, being disappointed, a guest leaves the house of a householder, he actually gives his sins to him and takes away all merits (of the householder). The man should honour him by offering even water or some vegetable, according to his capacity. Thereby, he gets freed (from worries).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

25-26. Marriages are of various types:[1] (1) *Brāhma*, (2) *Daiva*, (3) *Ārṣa*, (4) *Prājāpatya*, (5) *Āsura*, (6) *Gāndharva*, (7) *Rākṣasa*, and (8) *Paiśāca* said to be the eighth type. Kindly recount to me the modes and functions of these and further, mention in detail to me the various duties of the householder.

Pārāśara (Vyāsa) said:

27. *Brāhma* type of marriage is that wherein the bridegroom is invited and then bedecking one's daughter well, she is given in marriage. Their son shall sanctify twenty-one generations.

28. If the bride is given in marriage to a Ṛtvik presiding over sacrificial rite, the marriage is called *Daiva*. The son born of them saves fourteen successive generations of descendants. If the girl is given in marriage after receiving two cows (or a cow and a bull), the marriage is called *Ārṣa*. The son born of them sanctifies six successive generations.

29. (The father addresses the couple:) "Both of you carry on your prescribed duties" (and unites them in wedlock). This is called the *Prājāpatya* type of marriage. The *Gāndharva* type of marriage is the union of the bride and the bridegroom on the basis of their mutual love in accordance with their own wish. Forcible abduction of a girl is the *Rākṣasa* type of marriage. It is despised by all good persons.

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1. Vide *Āśvalāyana Gṛ S.* I.6, Manu III.21. For details vide HD, II.1.516-524. This Purāṇa is not in favour of intercaste marriages.

30. Kidnapping a girl by deceitful means is called *Paiśāca* type of marriage. It is the eighth type and is also despicable. The three types of marriage—Gāndharva, Āsura and Rākṣasa are usually followed by Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas.

31-34a. The eighth type is the most sinful of all and the birth of sinful persons is a sure result. If the girl is of the same caste (as that of the bridegroom, implying here the Brāhmaṇa caste) she grasps the hand of the bridegroom. (In case of a mixed marriage) an arrow is to be held by a Kṣatriya girl, a goad by a Vaiśya girl and the end of the garment by a Śūdra woman. This rule is applicable to the bride of a different caste from that of the bridegroom. This is found in Smṛti texts in regard to marriage (intercaste).

All brides of the same caste should grasp the hand (of the bridegroom of their own caste). This is the rule. In (case of) righteous marriage, the progeny is righteous too and the children live up to a hundred years. But of an unrighteous marriage, the children become devoid of righteousness. They are unfortunate, deficient in wealth and in longevity.

34b. (As for sexual approach) the following is the supreme religious instruction[1]. It is righteous for a householder to approach one's wife on the stipulated days (in *Ṛtukāla*, after monthly course).

35. Remembering the boon given to women, one should (carnally approach) as impelled by (the wife's sentiment of) love (but) such approach during the day time is regarded as extremely harmful to the life (longevity) of the man.

36. On days of Śrāddha rites and on all *Parvan* days, an intelligent man shall not approach his wife carnally. If he, out of infatuation, were to approach her, then he falls down from Dharma (meritorious and righteous conduct).

37. A householder who as a rule approaches his wife sexually only in the *Ṛtukāla* period, he who is always devoted to his own wife, should always be known a *Brahmacārin* (a person who observes the vow of celibacy).

38. In the Ārṣa type of marriage, the offer of two cows (or a cow and a bull) has been mentioned. It is permitted (nay even praised). But even an iota of fee (or price) taken on behalf of the girl causes the sin of selling the bride.

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1. VṼ 34b-37 prescribe the restriction on man-wife relations and a man observing them is treated as 'Celibate'.

39. If one sells one's child, one shall have to stay for a Kalpa in the hell *Viṭkṛmibhojana* (i.e. the hell where the condemned persons have to feed themselves on the worms in the faeces). Hence not even a bit of the property of one's daughter has to be made use of by a man.

40-41a. Thereby Mahālakṣmī becomes pleased and stays there along with Lord Viṣṇu.

(1) Adopting trader's profession, (2) service of base people, (3) not studying the Vedas, (4) base marriage and (5) omission of one's duties: these are the causes of the downfall of families.

41b-42. A householder has to perform five *Mahāyajñas* everyday.[1] He should perform daily act of purification (expiation) as a householder has to perform five acts involving killing.

43. In the kitchen there are the utensils *Kuṇḍanī* (pot), *Peṣaṇī* (pestle), *Cullī* (oven etc.), *Udakumbhī* (waterpot) and *Mārjanī* (broom). Some sort of killing is involved in their use. In order to ward off the adverse effects of these, five Yajñas have been prescribed. They enhance the glory and prosperity of the householder.

44. The five Yajñas are as follow: Recitation (of the Vedas) is *Brahmayajña; Tarpaṇa* (offering water libation to the manes) is *Pitṛyajña; Homa* is *Devayajña, Bali* (oblation) is *Bhūtayajña* and hospitality to guests is *Nṛyajña.*

45. One who comes while *Vaiśvadeva* is being performed, is known as a *Sūryoḍha* (one who arrives at the time of sunset). He is also considered to be a guest. They are to be fed even before (ordinary) guests. There should be no hesitation in this.

46. A householder who takes his food after offering oblations to the Manes, gods and human beings really partakes of nectar. One who takes food without offering these, is a filler of his own belly (i.e. a brute).

47. The twice-born ones, despite their having mastered the Vedas, should be known as Śūdras, if they are bereft of performance of *Vaiśvadeva* and hospitality to guests.

48. Those base Dvijas (twice-born ones) who take food without performing the Vaiśvadeva rite will be denied food in the world and shall be born as crows after death.

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1. The Five *Mahāyajñas* are described in vv 42 ff. V 43 is quoted in Jaina works to enumerate the five sins in a householder's life.

49. One should, without lethargy, perform everyday the holy rites laid down in the Vedas. If one does so within his own capacity, one shall attain the highest beatitude.

50. If oil bath is taken on the sixth or the eighth lunar day, if meat is taken at any time, if shaving is done or sexual indulgence is carried on the fourteenth and fifteenth lunar days, there is sin in these acts.

51. One should not see the sun directly when it rises,[1] when it sets, when it is directly overhead, when it is swallowed by Rāhu (i.e. during an eclipse) nor when it is in the *Aṇḍa* (? in elliptical form or is about to rise).

52. One should not look into one's own reflection in water. One should not run through muddy marshy places. One should not stare at a women in the nude, nor should one enter (water for bath) naked.

53-54. While going ahead one should circumambulate a temple, a Brāhmaṇa, a cow, honey, clay (a big heap?), the elders of the community, persons older in age, persons better educated, an Aśvattha tree, a tree growing in a temple of a holy place, the preceptor, a pot filled with water, cooked rice, curd and Siddhārtha (variety of mustard).

55. One should not have intercourse with a woman in her menses; one should not take food along with one's wife (in the same plate?). One should not take food wearing a single cloth, nor shall one take food seated on a high seat.

56-59. One should not look at an unclean woman if one wishes for brilliance. An excellent twice-born should never take food whether cooked (vegetarian) or meat (non-vegetarian dish) before performing the *Tarpaṇa* rite to the Manes and Devas, if one desires to live for a long time. One should never pass urine in a cowherds' colony, nor on an anthill, nor on ash. One should never pass urine in pits abounding in living insects. One should not pass urine while standing or walking. One should not answer calls of nature facing a Brāhmaṇa, the sun, fire, the moon, the stars or elder ones. One should not blow on fire with one's mouth. Nor should one stare at a naked woman.

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1 The 'Do's and 'Don't's recorded here are the views and practices of the Śiṣṭas at the time of this Purāṇa.

60. One should not warm one's feet in fire, nor should one throw impure things into it (fire). One should never harm or injure any living being. One should not take food during dusk or dawn.

61. No wise man should have sexual intercourse at dawn or dusk or in morning or in evening. No one shall look at a cow suckling or should point out a rainbow.

62. No one should sleep alone in an isolated place. No one should wake up a sleeping man. No one should proceed on a journey alone. No one should drink water by means of the palms.

63. During day time one should not consume curds with the essence removed, nor should one eat curds at night. One should not speak directly to a woman in her menstruation. One should not eat to one's full satisfaction during nights.

64-65. No one shall be too fond of the triple symphony of song, dance and instrumental music. One should not cause one's feet to be washed in a bell-metal vessel. If a man, devoid of wisdom, partakes of another Śrāddha after performing one, the donor does not derive the benefit of the Śrāddha and he who partakes of it shall become a sinner. One should not wear clothes or shoes worn by another.

66-68. One should not take food in a broken vessel, nor should one take up a seat spoiled by fire etc. One who is desirous of living for a long time should avoid riding on cows (bulls), smoke from a dead body (funeral pyre), river bank, early morning rays of the sun and sleep during day time. One should not wipe off the limbs after taking bath nor should one let loose (the hairs from) the tuft on the path.

One should not shake the head or the hands, nor should one drag the seat with the foot. One should not wipe off the body with the hand or with the cloth worn at the time of bath.

69. The body (thereby) becomes impure like food defiled by contact with a dog. It becomes pure again by taking bath once more. One should never pluck out hair or nails by biting them with teeth.

70. For one's own good, one shall avoid paring the nail with another nail. One shall strenuously avoid doing anything that one will be compelled to leave off at a future time.

71. Even in one's own house, one should never enter except through the (main) door. One should never play with those who

are ignorant of the rules of the game. One should never sit with the unrighteous or the sick.

72. One should never lie down or sleep naked. One should not take food off one's own palm. One who takes food with wet feet, hands and mouth shall not live long.

73. A twice-born should not lie down with wet feet. One should never proceed on a journey after being defiled by the leavings of food (i.e. without washing hands and mouth). One should not take food or drink water while lying down on the bed.

74. A person desirous of freedom from ailments should never sit with shoes on, nor should he drink water while standing up. He should not eat any foodstuff containing only sour articles (i.e. exclusively sour food).

75. One should not look at faeces and urine, nor should one touch one's head (with hands) defiled by remnants of food. One should not step upon charcoal of husk, ash and broken pots.

76-78. Close association with fallen people is but conducive to one's own fall. One should never offer a higher seat or rostrum to a Śūdra. (Thereby) a Brāhmaṇa becomes deficient in his Brāhmaṇical powers and a Śūdra in his merits. Instruction in Dharma to Śūdras shall obstruct one's own progress and glory.

Serving the twice-born is considered the highest duty of Śūdras.

Scratching the head with both the hands is not considered auspicious.

79. One should never teach a Vedic Mantra to a Śūdra. (Thereby) the Brāhmaṇa becomes deficient in his Brāhmaṇical powers and the Śūdra in his merit.

80-85. Clapping both the hands, shouting loudly, plucking the hairs, behaviour constantly transgressing the scriptures and acceptance of monetary gifts from a miserly person—by doing these a Brāhmaṇa goes to twenty-one hells.

DAYS ON WHICH VEDIC STUDY IS NOT TO BE PERFORMED

One should not study the Vedas during the following prohibited occasions: when there is untimely thunder; during rainy season; when there is a shower of dust; when children are making a loud noise (?) and at night. These are stated to be the times when no study (be undertaken). Further, when there is fall of a comet, earthquake or preternatural redness glowing the horizon or quar-

ters, during the middle of night, at dawn and dusk, in the vicinity of a Śūdra, when there is (revolutionary) commotion in the realm, when one is polluted due to child birth, during the ten *Aṣṭakā* days (eighth lunar day), on the *Bhūta* day (fourteenth day of the dark half of the lunar month), on the *Śrāddha* day, on the *Pratipad* (the first day of the lunar fortnight), on the full-moon day, on the eighth day, when there is faecal matter scattered, when there is rebellion in the country, on the day of *Upākarma* rite after the *Utsarga* rite, on the anniversary of the beginning of Kalpas and Yugas, after reciting the Āraṇyaka portion and on hearing the sound of Sāman recitation or the sound of an arrow (?).

86-87. On the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth day of a lunar fortnight, one should always observe the vow of celibacy.

Carnally approaching another man's wife leads to loss of longevity. Hence it has to be avoided altogether. Nor should one resort to one's enemies. One should not consider oneself low, if one is forsaken by previous prosperity and glory, because glory and learning are not inaccessible to persons of perseverance.

88. One should speak the truth. One should speak what is pleasing. One should not speak the truth that is not pleasing. One should not speak the untruth that is pleasing. This is laid down as Dharma.

89. One should curb sudden outburst of vehement speech, thought and (temptation of) eating. One should not touch the hair (on the private parts) as one becomes impure by touching them.

90. One should throw out far from the house water with which the feet are washed, urine, water that is defiled by leavings of food, spits, and phlegm.

91. A twice-born can recall his previous birth by repeating the Vedic Mantras day and night, by resorting to codes of good conduct and cleanliness as well as by the intellect not at all disposed to evil.

92. One should endeavour to respect elderly persons and offer them one's seat. He should always bow down to them and follow them politely.

93. One should never censure the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, gods, kings, good people, sages and chaste women.

94-96. One should take bath in other men's ponds etc. after removing five balls of clay (from the pond). The monetary gift that is given at the proper place and time and in the proper manner

to a deserving person will be endlessly beneficial, whatever the gift may be (in kind and quantity).

A person who makes a land-gift becomes the ruler of a zone; one who makes a gift of food becomes happy everywhere; one who makes a gift of water shall become handsome; one who gifts food shall become well nourished; one who makes a gift of a lamp shall become clear in vision; one who makes a gift of a cow enjoys the region of Aryaman.

97. A donor of gold attains longevity; a donor of gingelly seeds gets good progeny. One who gifts a house becomes lord of a mansion and a donor of garments attains the lunar region.

98. One who gifts houses attains a divine body; he who gifts bulls becomes wealthy. One who gifts a tent or a good palanquin gets a good wife.

99. Both of them—he who accepts with faith and he who gifts with faith—attain heaven. If they do not have faith, they fall down.

100. Sacrifices perish due to falsehood; penance diminishes due to arrogance; reputation perishes without liberal gifts and longevity suffers by slighting Brāhmaṇas.

101. Scents, flowers, Darbha grass, cows, greens (vegetables), meat, milk, curds, jewel, fish, abode and grains—these should be accepted when they are offered.

102. Honey, water, fruit, root, fuel and monetary gifts for granting freedom from fear—all these may be accepted when offered even from a lowly person.

103. Among Śūdra classes, Dāsa (servant), barber, cowherd, a family friend and *Ardhasīrin* (a cultivator who shares half the crop for his labour) and one's informer—these should be fed with food.

104. Thus, O Yudhiṣṭhira, the code of good conduct for the residents of Dharmāraṇya has been recounted as mentioned in the Veda.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Code of Conduct for Women etc.

Vyāsa said:

1. If, after reaching Dharmavāpī, a person performs the *Tarpaṇa* rite for his Manes, they derive satisfaction for a period of the tenure of fourteen Indras (i.e. a Manvantara).

2. After reaching this sacred tank that accords deliverance, the Manes, the ancestors who have attained heaven should be worshipped. He shall offer balls of rice unto them.

3. A Brāhmaṇa who offers a ball of rice with single-minded devotion in Kali obtains the benefit that is acquired in five days in Tretā and in three days in Dvāpara.

4. At the advent of Kali, people in the world become greedy. Persons are attached to other men's wives. Women too are extremely fickle.

5. Men, women and eunuchs, all are engaged in doing harm to others. They are eagerly devoted to slandering others and finding out the weakness of others.

6. They are indeed bent upon causing anxieties to others. They quarrel and cause dissension among friends. All of them become pure (in this holy place). So said the three Lords: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva themselves.

7. Thus, O blessed one, Dharmāraṇya has been described. The fruit thereof too is as mentioned by the trident-bearing Lord Śiva.

8-10. (Those people become) pure in mind, word and body, averse to the wives of others. They are free from hatred, and are endowed with equanimity. They are pure and devoted to mothers and fathers, free from avarice and covetousness, devoted to making liberal gifts. They are believers in the existence of God, the authority of the Vedas and the other world. They know what is Dharma (righteousness) and are loyally devoted to their masters. The women are chaste and engage themselves in serving their husbands. They desist from violence and are very hospitable They are always devoted to their duties.

Śaunaka said:

11-12. Listen, O blessed Sūta, O holy one, the foremost among

those who are conversant with righteousness. The code of good conduct of householders has been heard by me direct from your lips.

I have a desire now, O Sūta-born One, (to satisfy) which, kindly recount. Tell me the characteristics of all chaste women.

Sūta said:[1]

13. Fruitful indeed is the life of one in whose house there is a chaste woman. Like his very shadow, she is closely associated with him. Even a talk (reference) about her causes merit and holiness.

14-15. Chaste women are on a par with Arundhatī, Sāvitrī, Anasūyā, Śāṇḍilī, Satī, Lakṣmī, Śatarūpā, Menā, Sunīti, Saṁjñā, and Svāhā. The duties of chaste women have been enumerated by Sage Vyāsa.

16. She takes food after the husband has taken food; when he stands, she stands up together. She goes to bed after he has gone to sleep, and gets up before him.

17. When the husband has gone abroad, she keeps herself unadorned. When he is deputed anywhere on an errand, she avoids all jewellery.

18. She does not speak out the name of her husband in order to give him long life. She never mentions the name of another man too.

19. Even when dragged up by him, she does not cry aloud. Even if she is beaten by him, she continues to be gracious. When he says, "Do this", she replies, "My lord, be assured that it is done."

20. When she is called, she leaves off the work on hand and goes to him quickly (and says) "Wherefore, O lord, have I been called? Be pleased to tell me that."

21. She does not tarry long at the door. She does not (frequently) go to the gate. She never gives anything herself, if it is something not to be given.

22. Without being told, she gets ready all the materials of daily worship such as water for rituals, Kuśa grass, flowers, leaves, raw rice grains etc.

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1. V.V 13-66 detail the duties of a chaste wife.

23. Waiting for other things as the occasion demands, she brings them with all pleasure without demur.

24. She partakes of the leavings of her husband's food, fruit etc. liked by him. She completely avoids watching community festivals etc. (if he is not accompanying her).

25-26. Then, she does not go on pilgrimages or similar excursions, nor for attending marriage festivities (without her husband). She does not wake up her husband when he is sound asleep, (or disturb him) comfortably seated or engaged in sports and pastime even when the matter on hand is likely to be obstructed. When she is in her monthly courses, she does not come into view personally.

27. Till she takes her purificatory bath, she does not even talk within his hearing. After taking the bath properly, she should look at the face of her husband and never that of anyone else. Or after meditating on her husband, she should look at the sun.

28-29. A chaste woman desiring a long life for her husband should see that the following auspicious things are never out of reach: turmeric, saffron, vermillion, collyrium, bodice, betel leaf, auspicious jewellery, hair tonics and embellishments, bangles, earrings and other ornaments.

30. She does not talk to a woman who speaks ill of her husband. She should not take bath anywhere in the nude.

31. A chaste woman shall never sit upon a mortar, pestle, broom, stone, any machine or on the threshold.

32. She should not exhibit bold wilfulness in anything except during sexual dalliance. She should always express her interest and delight wherever her husband shows his interest.

33. She should never transgress the words of her husband. This is the vow of women; this is the highest virtue and the holiest of worships.

34. She should never stray from her husband even if he is impotent, miserably placed, sickly, senile, infirm or unsteady.

35. If ghee, asafoetida, salt etc. are exhausted, a chaste woman shall not mention that they are not in store (at the time when the husband takes food). She should not serve food in iron vessels.

36. Desirous of taking holy dip in a sacred Tīrtha, she should drink the water with which her husband's feet are washed. To a woman the husband is superior to Lord Śaṅkara and Lord Viṣṇu.

37. If a woman transgresses the injunction of her husband and

performs holy rites, fasts and other observances, she takes away the longevity of her husband. After her death, she falls into a hell.

38. A hot-tempered woman who, when addressed, gives rude reply, is reborn as a bitch in a village or as a vixen in a desolate forest.

39. This is said to be the greatest and only sacred observance of women that they should resolve to take their food only after worshipping the feet of their husbands.

40. (A chaste woman) should not occupy a seat higher (than that of her husband). She should not (frequently) go to other people's houses. There she should never speak harsh words.

41-42. In the vicinity of elders, she should not speak loudly or call others in a loud voice. An evil-minded woman who abandons her husband and goes to a secret place, is reborn as a ruthless female owl always lying ensconced in the hollow of a tree.

43. On being struck, if she were to strike him back, she is reborn as a tigress or a cat. She who casts loving glances at others, becomes a squint-eyed one.

44. She who sets aside her husband and partakes of sweet dishes alone, is reborn in a village as a female pig or a bat feeding on faeces.

45-48. She who utters *hum* expressive of contempt or reproach and addresses her husband in second person singular (instead of the respectful plural) and speaks harsh words to her husband, certainly becomes dumb (in the next birth). She who is envious of her co-wife, always becomes a shrew (in every birth). She who glances lovingly at another man when the husband is not seeing her, becomes ugly, one-eyed or foul-faced.

If a woman on seeing the husband returning from his sojourn out of the house, hurriedly receives him with offerings of water, seat, betel leaves, fans, massaging the feet, addressing sweet words and removing sweat and with other types of services and pleases him, the three worlds are delighted by her.

A father offers but little, a brother offers but little and so a son. But the husband offers much. Which woman will not worship him?

Husband is the lord; husband is the preceptor. He alone is the veritable *dharma* (virtue), sacred rites, holy shrine etc. Hence after setting aside everything, the wife should worship solely her husband.

49. Just as body bereft of soul becomes impure instantaneously,

so also a woman without her husband is always impure, despite clean baths.

50. A widow is more inauspicious than all inauspicious things. Never can there be the accomplishment of anything when a widow is sighted.

51. All widows except one's mother are devoid of auspiciousness. A wise man must avoid even their blessings, like serpents.

52. At the time of the marriage of a girl, the Brāhmaṇas shall recite thus: "She shall be the constant companion of her husband whether he is alive or not."

53. A chaste woman who follows her husband from the house to the cremation ground for self-immolation undoubtedly attains the merit of a horse-sacrifice at every step.

54. Just as a snake-catcher forcibly retrieves a snake from its hole, so also a chaste woman retrieves her husband from the messengers of Yama and goes to heaven.

55-58. On seeing a chaste woman the messengers of Yama flee. On seeing the splendour of a chaste woman even the sun feels burning sensation, even the fire gets burnt and all other luminaries begin to tremble. A chaste woman sportingly enjoys heavenly pleasures along with her husband for as many crores and ten thousand years as there are hairs on her body.

Blessed indeed is that mother in the world, blessed is that father and blessed is that husband in whose house there is a chaste woman. All the members of the families of her father, mother and husband enjoy the pleasures of heaven, as a result of the merit of the chaste woman.

59. By losing her modesty and chastity, a woman of evil deeds causes the fall of the three families of her father, mother and husband. She becomes miserable both here and hereafter.

60. Wherever the foot of a chaste woman is placed, the ground becomes sanctified, a holy ground, worthy of being honoured. There is no holier burden (than the foot of a chaste woman placed on the earth).

61. Even the sun fearfully touches a chaste woman. The moon and a Gandharva too touch her in order to sanctify themselves and not otherwise.

62. Waters always desire the contact of a chaste woman. There is no destruction of sins (even) through Gāyatrī. She (a chaste woman) is a dispeller of sins through her vow of chastity.

63. Are there no women in every house priding themselves on their beauty and charm? But only through devotion to the Lord of the universe (Śiva) does one attain a chaste wife.

64. Wife is at the root of everything concerning a householder; wife is the source of happiness. Wife is the fruit of virtue: wife is for the increase of progeny.

65. The other world and this world—these two are won over by means of a wife. It is through a wife in the house that gods, Manes and guests are propitiated. Only he should be considered a true householder, who has a chaste wife in his house.

66. Just as the body becomes holy and sanctified through a dip in the river Gaṅgā, so also the home becomes pure at the sight of a chaste woman.

67. A widow who habitually lies on a couch causes the downfall of her husband.[1] Hence she should resort to the habit of lying on the ground, if she desires for the ultimate happiness of her husband.

68. Cleansing of the body with fragrant unguents should never be indulged in by a widow. She should never make use of sweet scents.

69. Citing their names and the Gotra lineage, the *Tarpaṇa* rite (water libation) with Kuśa grass, gingelly seeds and water should be done to the husband, his father and his grandfather.

70. Viṣṇu-worship must be performed with the intellect directed towards the husband and not otherwise. She should always meditate upon her husband as having taken the form of Viṣṇu, Hari.

71. Whatever in the world happens to be a favourite thing of the husband, whatever is eagerly sought after by the husband, should be given as gift unto a meritorious person, with a desire to delight her own husband.

72. In the months of Vaiśākha and Kārttika she should have special observances such as holy bath, visiting holy places, making monetary gifts and frequent listening to the Purāṇas.

73. Offering water-pots in the month of Vaiśākha and lights with clarified butter in Kārttika and grains, gingelly seeds etc. in the month of Māgha is highly praised in the heavenly world.

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1. VV 67-82 describe the duties of widows.

74. Sheds for supplying water to travellers should be made and maintained in the month of Vaiśākha and the following offerings should be made to the Lord: necklace, Uśīra (fragrant grass of *Andropogon muricatus),* fan, umbrella, fine fabrics and sandalpaste.

75-76. The following things should be given to prominent Brāhmaṇas with the prayer "May my husband be pleased": betel leaf with camphor, flowers, various types of water-pots, flower-grottos, various kinds of beverages, grapes, bananas etc.

77. In the month of Ūrja (i.e. Kārttika) she should eat only cooked barley or a single meal (of one type of grain). She shall avoid brinjals, sūrana (*Amarphophalus campamulatus*) and Śuka Śambi (*Mucuna pruritus*).

78. In the month of Kārttika she should eschew oil and (use of) bell-metal vessel. If she observes the vow of silence in the month of Kārttika, she should make a gift of a beautiful bell.

79. If she takes the vow of taking food only on leaves, she should make a gift of a bell-metal vessel filled with ghee. If the vow is for lying (sleeping) on the ground, a soft and fine bed of cotton should be given as a gift.

80. If one has eschewed any fruit, that fruit has to be given as gift; if one has eschewed any juice, that particular juice has to be given; if any grain has been eschewed, that grain has to be given or paddy. Paddy grain may also be given alternatively. One should endeavour to make the gift of a cow fully adorned with gold ornaments.

81. On one side stand the gifts of all things and on the other side the gift of a lamp. They do not deserve even a sixteenth part of the (merit of the) gift of a lamp in the month of Kārttika.

82. Thus the religious observances of widows have been recounted. The merit belongs to those and not to others.

83. After arriving at Dharmavāpī, a wise devotee should make liberal gifts. His belongings increase millionfold as recounted by Brahmā.

84. If a devotee, standing in front of Lord Dharmeśvara, makes a gift of *Tiladhenu* (i.e. gingelly seeds in the shape of a cow), he is honoured in the heavenly world for as many years as there are gingelly seeds.

85. After reaching Dharmakṣetra one should perform the Śrāddha rite without any lethargy. Certainly the Manes will be pleased with him for the entire year.

86-88. All his ancestors who may happen to be in heaven or hell, those who have attained the state of animals, those who have remained as spirits—for all these one should perform the Śrāddha rite in Dharmakūpa in accordance with the injunctions.

The grains of offerings scattered on the ground here by men, propitiate those who have attained the state of Piśācas (ghosts). If (water) dripping down from their clothes after their bath falls on the ground, O dear son, those who have become trees can be propitiated thereby.

89. The propitiation of those who have attained godhood is effected by the bits of barley grains that fall on the ground.

90. The propitiation of those who have gone to the nether worlds is through those bits of cooked rice that fall on the ground, when the offerings of balls of rice are made.

91. Those who omitted the various rites befitting the caste and stage of life, those who were not consecrated properly and died, come here and partake of the water wafted by sweeping.

92. Others attain satisfaction by means of the water that drops down on the ground after the meals or ceremonial sipping of the water (*Ācamana*) by Brāhmaṇas.

93-95. Thus the person who worships and he who becomes pure on being slightly touched by the scattered water drops and leavings of food of those Brāhmaṇas, those who are fallen in the hell and those who have attained other births—all these, O dear one, become satisfied with the performance of the Śrāddha rite in the proper manner.

If Śrāddha rite is performed by men with money earned by illegitimate means, they become propitiated by means of the Śrāddha in their (future) births as Cāṇḍālas, Pulkasas etc.

96-98. Thus, O dear one, many of his kinsmen too are made to flourish thereby. If there is no capacity to perform Śrāddha elaborately like this, it can be performed by means of greens and vegetables. Hence a man should perform Śrāddha devoutly by means of greens and vegetables in accordance with the injunctions. The family of the person who performs thus, never becomes impoverished or disabled. If he commits sins, his sins increase and the person who performs Śrāddha (carelessly) is undoubtedly cooked in a terrible hell.

99-100. Just as merits so also sins, both auspicious and inauspicious rites, become increased, O excellent king, when carried

out in Dharmāraṇya. It is lovable, it accords desires, it is divine and it accords deliverance to Yogins. Dharmāraṇya is said to be that which accords Siddhis (accomplishments) to Siddhas (or those desirous of Siddhis).

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Coming of Viṣṇu

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O holy lord, I do not feel fully satiated by hearing the sacred story of Dharmāraṇya. As you proceed ahead with the narration, my mind becomes more and more eager to hear what transpired thereafter. I am very curious about it.

Vyāsa said:

2-5. O son of Pṛthā, listen to the story of great merit as taken from Skandapurāṇa[1]. It had been recounted to Skanda by Sthāṇu (Śiva). It is the auspicious story concerning Dharmāraṇya. It accords the merit of visiting all sacred spots (to the listener). It is destructive of all calamities.

The son bowed down to Lord Śiva who was seated on the summit of Kailāsa, who is the lord of gods and the preceptor of the universe, who has five faces, ten arms and three eyes, who is armed with a trident, a skull and *Khaṭvāṅga* (a club with a skull at the top), who has a serpent as the sacred thread, who was surrounded by his followers, who was bowed down to by Suras and Asuras, who was praised by means of songs and served by Gandharvas and celestial damsels of diverse forms and qualities and who was accompanied by Nārada and other leaders. The son bowed down to the great lord, the Consort of Umā and said:

Skanda said:

6. O lord, Indra and other gods including Brahmā have come

1. Is it a reference to another Upapurāṇa called Skanda? This self-reference by the Purāṇa leads to the suspicion of the story being a later addition.

to your door, desirous of having your audience. I shall do in front of you whatever you command me to do.

Vyāsa said:

7. On hearing the words of Skanda, Hara stood up from his seat. Desirous of going ahead, he did not wait even for the arrival of his bull for riding.

8-10. On seeing Śiva who was desirous of going, Skanda spoke these words:

Skanda asked:

O lord, what is the work that the Devas have (for you) so urgent that you are being called hurriedly even without the bull. O ocean of mercy, kindly tell me, if you have mercy on me. Is there any impending battle between Devas and Dānavas? Or is there any other greater task?

Śiva said:

11-12. Listen with single-mindedness why I am busily engaged. There is a highly sacred region of great merit on the earth, the region Dharmāraṇya. I am desirous of going there along with Devas, O Six-faced One.[1]

Skanda said:

13. O great lord, what will you be doing now after going there? O lord of the universe, tell me your task entirely, in all its detail.

Śiva said:

14-16. Listen, dear son, to these words that give delight to the mind. At the outset it is *Mahat* (the 'Great Principle') that is the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of all that happens (exists). But when *Pralaya* (final dissolution) takes place, everything is engulfed by darkness. At that time Brahman alone that

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1. The Nominative Singular, 'Ṣaḍānanaḥ' is probably a misprint for the Vocative Singular, 'Ṣaḍānana'

is devoid of attributes, that is the seed (of everything) and that is imperishable existed. That which is created at the outset through the *Guṇas* is called *Mahādravya.*

17-18. When the great Kalpa arrives and all the mobile and immobile beings get dissolved, the lord of the universe identifies himself with the (cosmic) waters and begins to divert himself happily.

After the lapse of a long time, he created a big tree beautiful with ten thousand branches through the excellent *Tattvas* (Principles) such as Earth etc.

19-20. It was a very large tree. It was laden with big fruits hanging everywhere. It was splendid with its trunk and branches and other parts. It was a great *Nyagrodha* (*Ficus religiosa*) tree filled with fruits and knotted stumps.

Thereafter Vāsudeva, Janāradana assumed the form of a child and lay on the leaves of that tree eager to create the universe.

21-22. Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, was born of the lotus from the navel of Viṣṇu. He saw water everywhere of various forms but having no definite shape. On seeing it, O dear son, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, said in despair, "What indeed should I do?"

23. Thereupon providentially the following unembodied speech rose up (and announced) in the sky: "O creator and dispenser of destiny, perform penance so that you may see me."

24-25. On hearing those words, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, performed a terribly great penance there, which was extremely difficult (for everyone).

Then smiling sportively the kind-hearted Consort of Lakṣmī who assumed the form of a child, said these sweet words:

Śrīviṣṇu said:

26-29. Now, dear son, create duly nether worlds, earth, rivers, seas and forests in the Cosmic Sphere. The following too should be created: trees, mountains, bipeds, animals, birds, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, beasts of prey and all those living beings of eight million and four hundred thousand species. They are to be of four different types, each consisting of two million and one hundred thousand species. They are: (1) *Udbhijjas* or species of vegetation that grow breaking up the surface of the earth; (2) *Svedajas* or sweat-born ones such as insects, worms etc.;

(3) *Jarāyujas* (viviparous beings) and (4) *Aṇḍajas* (oviparous beings). You create all these things quickly."

After saying this, he vanished. The Cosmic Egg was created by Brahmā in the manner as instructed.

30-38. In that, Pitāmaha (the creator and grandfather of the world) was the sole lord, the divinity presiding over creation. Others too were born, such as Sthāṇu (Śiva), the preceptor of gods (Bṛhaspati), the Sun, Pracetas, the Supreme Beings (Parameṣṭhins), Dakṣa, Dakṣa's sons, the seven Sages etc. Thereupon were born the twenty-one Prajāpatis and the Puruṣa, the incomprehensible. So the ancient sages know. Then Viśvedevas, Ādityas, Vasus, twin gods Aśvins, Yakṣas, Piśācas, Sādhyas, Pitṛs (Manes) and Guhyakas were born. Then were born the Scholars, the eight Brahmarṣis of no impurity, and the many Rājarṣis all of whom had risen up through their good qualities. Then the sky, the waters, the earth, the wind, the atmosphere and the quarters were born.

Years, seasons, months, fortnights and days and nights were created in due order. Then were born Kalās, Kāṣṭhas, Muhūrta etc., Nimeṣa etc. and Lavas (all these are small units of time).

Then the group of planets along with the stars and constellations, Yugas (Ages) beginning with Manvantara, and also other things were born as witness to the worlds.

Dear son, the universe, this group (of planets) which is visible, consisting of the mobile and immobile beings is shrunk up when the dissolution of the Yuga has arrived.

Just as, in the various seasons, in the course of their successive occurrence, the different names and forms are seen in their original forms themselves, so also in the case of the Yugas etc., dear son.

Śiva said:

39. Henceforth, I shall narrate the auspicious traditional story, dear son, the recounting of the lineage of Brahmā.

40. The mental sons of Brahmā are known to be the six great sages, viz. Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu.

41. Kaśyapa was the son of Marīci and the remaining Prajās (Progeny) were born of Kaśyapa. Thirteen daughters of great fortune were born of Dakṣa.

42-43. They were: Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kālā, Danāyu, Siṁhikā, Krodhā, Provā, Vasiṣṭhā, Vinatā, Kapilā, Kaṇḍū and Sunetrā. (Dakṣa) gave them to Kaśyapa. Of Aditi were born the twelve Ādityas of auspicious faces.

44. Dharmarāṭ was born of Sūrya. This excellent Dharmāraṇya was formerly created (constructed) by that Dharma. O Skanda, this (region) has been called by me Dharmāraṇya. It accords merit.

Skanda said:

45. The narrative of Dharmāraṇya is extremely sacred. I wish to hear it. O great lord, kindly narrate everything (to me).

Īśvara said:

46. All the Devas including Indra have arrived along with Brahmā. I too shall go to that holy shrine that dispels sin.

Skanda said:

47-50. I too shall come to visit it, O Moon-crested Lord.

Sūta said:

Then all these (following) went there: Skanda, Rudra, Sūrya, Anila (Wind), Anala (Fire), Siddhas and Gandharvas, the splendid celestial damsels, Piśācas, all the Guhyakas, Indra, Varuṇa, all the Nāgas (Serpents), Śukra, Vācaspati, all the Planets along with the Stars, the eight Vasus, Dhruva and others, all those who move through the sky and all those who reside on mountains.

51-52. Then all the Suras including Brahmā went to Vaikuṇṭha with great joy. Thereafter, Brahmā went to Viṣṇu of unlimited splendour, in order to consult him. After going to Vaikuṇṭha, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, meditated for a short while and spoke to Viṣṇu with great pleasure:

Brahmā said:

53-59. Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa of mighty large arms, O great lord of great compassion, you are the creator, you are the destroyer. You alone are the father (maintainer) of the universe. Obeisance to you, the pervader (of everything), O gentle lord with Garuḍa for the emblem, obeisance to you. Bow to you, O consort of Kamalā, obeisance to you in the form of supreme Brahman. Obeisance to

you in the form of Fish. O lord of the Cosmic form, obeisance to you. Bow to you, the destroyer of Daityas, to you who offer freedom from fear to the devotees. Hail to you, the slayer of Kaṁsa. Obeisance to the conqueror of Daitya Bali.

On being eulogized by Brahmā thus, Lord Janārdana became visible. He was clad in yellow garments. He was dark-complexioned like a cloud. His vehicle was Garuḍa, the enemy of serpents. He had four arms. He had great brilliance. He was holding the conch, the discus and the mace. That lord of unlimited valour was being eulogized by all the Suras and Vidyādharas. He was eulogized by all the Nāgas. That lord of unlimited brilliance of (many) suns stood up. He was adorned with a crown etc. which had brilliance of a million gems.

CHAPTER NINE

Different Spiritual Lineages and Their Goddesses

Vyāsa said:

1. May it be heard, O tiger among kings. It is a meritorious and excellent narration. The lord of the universe spoke these words on being eulogized (thus):

Viṣṇu said:

2. What for have you all come, O excellent Suras including Brahmā? I hope there is weal all over the world. Whence has fear befallen you?

3a. Thereupon the delighted Brahmā spoke these words to Keśava:

3b-6 "We have nothing to fear in all the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings. I have approached you to inform you of one thing. That I shall narrate to you now. Listen to my words. Formerly a great and excellent holy place was established by Dharma. I am desirous of seeing it with your favour, O Lord

Janārdana. O lord of the chiefs of gods, kindly make up your mind to go there, so that the excellent Dharmāraṇya may attain the status of an excellent sacred spot."

Viṣṇu said:

7. Well said, well spoken, O blessed one! Hasten thereto. Do not delay. My mind too is desirous of seeing it.

Vyāsa said:

8-10. Riding on Garuḍa, Govinda went there quickly. Thereupon the Devas along with Indra and multitudes of sages, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others were seen from a distance by Dharma. He rejoiced too.

On seeing those Devas with Viṣṇu at the head, Dharma came there from his hermitage in front of them, taking with him (the materials of) worship.

Rising up from his seat promptly, holding the materials of hospitality etc., he performed the worship of everyone of them separately.

11. Seating them in their respective seats, the son of the Sun-god duly performed their worship. The worship (i.e. reception) was really grand.

Yama said:

12. O son of Devakī, with your favour, your propitiation and Śiva's kindness, this spot has attained the status of a sacred place.

13. Today my birth has become fruitful; today my penance has borne its fruit. Today my holy place has become fruitful due to the close contact of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

Vyāsa said:

14-15. On being eulogized thus, Viṣṇu spoke these sweet words: "O Dharmarāja, I am delighted by this eulogy of thine. Request for something from me. I shall do what you desire. I shall undoubtedly grant you whatever you wish."

Yama said:

16. If you are pleased, O Lord of Devas, if you wish to do

me a favour, kindly establish the hermitages of sages in this highly meritorious Dharmāraṇya.

17. Where Vāḍavas (Brāhmaṇas) stay and where sacrificial priests perform Yajñas, that place, reverberating with the chanting of the Vedas, shines as an excellent holy spot.

18. Animals will devastate this place which is bereft of Brāhmaṇas. Hence, O Śauri (Viṣṇu), bring many sages and Brāhmaṇas so that Dharmāraṇya may shine in all the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings.

19-20. Then the thousand-eyed, thousand-headed, thousand-footed Viṣṇu, fond of Dharma, assumed thousands of forms. On that holy spot Brāhmaṇas of good conduct and auspicious observances were established. All of them were experts in righteous activities. They were well-versed in all the Śāstras. They were of good reputation in (performance of) penance and perfect knowledge. They were keenly devoted to the performance of *Brahmayajña* rites. Eighteen thousand sages were thus settled there.

21-22. They were brought from different countries and established there by Suras. Many hermitages were built by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva there for the propagation and instruction of righteousness. Through Kṛṣṇa, Śiva and Brahmā, Keśava thus established them in their respective places.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

23. In which families were those Brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas, born? They were established along with their kinsmen. They were surrounded by sons and grandsons. They were accompanied by many disciples. They were devoted to the performance of Agnihotra. Kindly mention to me their abodes and names befittingly.

Vyāsa said:

24-25. May this be heard, O tiger among kings. I am recounting the names of those noble-souled Brāhmaṇas who inhabited Dharmāraṇya, of the sages who had sublimated their sexual energy and of their sons and grandsons.

26-32. O great son of Pāṇḍu, the Gotras of the Brāhmaṇas were

twenty-four in number.[1] Their branches and subsidiary branches, sons and grandsons were numerous. Hundreds and thousands of sons were born. The names of the (main) sages have been mentioned already. Listen to *Pravaras* (spiritual lineages). I shall mention the names of twenty-four principal ones. They are: (1) Bhāradvāja, (2) Vatsa, (3) Kauśika, (4) Kuśa, (5) Śāṇḍilya, (6) Kāśyapa, (7) Gautama, (8) Chāndhana, (9) Jātūkarṇya, (10) Vatsa (? repetition), (11) Vasiṣṭha, (12) Dhāraṇa, (13) Ātreya, (14) Bhāṇḍila, (15) (from this onwards the persons are mundane i.e. not divine) Kṛṣṇāyana, (16) Upamanyu, (17) Gārgya, (18) Mudgala, (19) Mauṣaka, (20) Puṇyāsana, (21) Parāśara, (22) Kauṇḍinya, (23) Gāni, (24) Āsana. These are the twenty-four Pravaras. The Pravaras of the Jāmadagnya Gotra are five only. They are: (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyavana, (3) Āpnuvāna, (4) Aurva and (5) Jamadagnika. O king, these five Pravaras are famous and well-known in all the worlds.

33-34. Thus the Brāhmaṇas born of different Gotras (become) masters of the Vedas. They regularly performed the worship and other rites befitting the twice-born. They were devoted to different sacrificial rites. They were endowed with all good qualities and were engaged in the six holy rites. Thus were the extremely fortunate Brāhmaṇas (there) who hailed from many different countries.

35-39. (*Partially defective text*) There is a third (?) Gotra called Bhāmevasa (?). It has five Pravaras, viz. (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyāvana, (3) Āpnuvāna, (4) Aurva and (5) Jāmadagnya. The third one (? one that has three Pravaras) consists of (1) Ātreya, (2) Arcanānasa and (3) Śyāvāsya. The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra were defiled ones with crooked ways. They were wealthy, righteous and masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. All of them were equally devoted to making liberal gifts as well as personal enjoyment. They were greatly honoured (as experts) in the various rites both Vedic and

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1 VV 26-99 give the Gotras and Pravaras of the Brāhmaṇas settled in Dharmāraṇya. The connection of Gotra and Pravara is given by P.V. Kane (in HD II, i, 497) as follows:

"Gotra is the latest ancestor or one of the latest ancestors of a person by whose name his family has been known for generations; while Pravara is constituted by the sage or sages who lived in the remotest past, who were most illustrious and who are generally the ancestors of the Gotra sages or in some cases the remotest ancestor alone."

It will be interesting to investigate the Gotra-Pravaras of the Brāhmaṇas in Moharpur area of Mirzapur District and compare them with the lists given here.

Smārta (i.e. laid down in the Smṛtis). The Brāhmaṇas in the Māṇḍavya Gotra should be known as having five Pravaras, viz. (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyavana, (3) Atri, (4) Āpnuvāna and (5) Aurva. The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra do regularly follow the Vedas and Smṛtis. They are sickly, avaricious and defiled. They are engaged in worshipping for themselves or on behalf of others. All the Māṇḍavyas are devoted to Brāhmaṇical holy rites, O foremost among the descendants of Kuru.

40. Of those who are born in the Gotra of Gārgya, there are three Pravaras, viz. (1) Aṅgiras, (2) Aṁbarīṣa and (3) Yauvanāśva the third.

41-43. Those who are born in this Gotra are speakers of truth and are of good conduct. They are quiescent and are of different colours. They are poor in wealth and habitually wear dirty clothes. They possess the qualities of endearment and desire for close association. They are never wayward in the adherence to the Vedas and Śāstras.

There are five Pravaras, O king, of Brāhmaṇas in the Vatsa Gotra. They are: (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyavana, (3) Āpnuvāna, (4) Aurva and (5) Jamadagnika. With these the five (types of) Brāhmaṇas are well-known as having the form of Brahmā.

44-46a. They are calm with self-control. They are of good conduct. They have righteous sons. They are bereft of a regular study of the Vedas. They are adepts in all activities. They have handsome features. They are well-behaved and well-established in all holy rites. All of them practise the righteousness of liberal gifts. All those Brāhmaṇas make gifts of food and water. They are compassionate and conduct themselves nicely. They are devoted to the well-being of all living things.

46b-49. Brāhmaṇas of Kāśyapa Gotra, O king, have three Pravaras, viz. (1) Kāśyapa, (2) Āpavatsāra and (3) Naidhruva, the third. They are conversant with the Vedas and are fair-complexioned. They are steadfast in their convictions and regularly perform Yajñas. They are fond of their homes. They are highly skilled and are always devoted to their preceptors. They are of good status and of great honour. They are devoted to the welfare of all living beings. The Brāhmaṇas of Kāśyapa lineage perform great sacrifices.

Those born of Dhārīṇasa (Dhāraṇa in verse 29) Gotra have three Pravarās.

50-52a. They are named: (1) Agastidarva, (2) Śvetāśva and (3) Dadhyavāhana. Those who are born in this Gotra keep up holy rites. All of them are ruthless in their activities and they are gluttons. Their ears hang down and their jaws are big. These Brāhmaṇas are greedy of wealth. They are bad-tempered and are prone to hatred. They are awesome and fearful for all living beings.

52b-53. The Brāhmaṇas born of Laugākṣasa (Gotra) strictly adhere to truth. They have three Pravaras who are by nature seekers of truth. They are: Kāśyapa, Vatsa and Vasiṣṭha, the third.

54-57. They are well-known as well-behaved Vaiṣṇavas of various occupations and avocations. The Brāhmaṇas are dark-complexioned having profuse hairs (all over the body). They are quiescent, of good conduct and of perfect self-control. They are always loyal and faithful to their wives.

Those who are born of Kuśika Gotra, have three Pravaras. Those three are: (1) Viśvāmitra, (2) Devarāta and (3) Audala. Those who are born in this Gotra are feeble and of poor mental accomplishments. The Brāhmaṇas have the habit of speaking untruth but the excellent kings (of this Gotra?) are of splendid features. The Brāhmaṇas who are well-versed in Vedic study are experts in all branches of learning.

58-61. Those who are of the same Gotra as Upamanyu have three Pravaras: (1) Vasiṣṭha, (2) Bharadvāja and (3) Indrapramada. The Brāhmaṇas in this Gotra are cruel and capricious. They are slander-mongers. They hate all others. They are vain and mean-minded and are eager to amass everything. They are experts in instigating quarrels. They are wealthy and proud. They are always defiled and fond of the company of evil-minded persons. They are sickly and weak with no proper arrangement for their livelihood.

The Brāhmaṇas born of Vātsya Gotra have five Pravaras.

62-64. They are: (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyavana, (3) Āpnuvāna, (4) Aurva and (5) Jamadagnika.

The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra are stout and versatile. They are devoted to all activities and are unswervingly faithful to all righteous actions. They are clever at debates regarding interpretations of Vedas and other scriptures. They are engaged in performing sacrifices and helping others to perform them. They are of good conduct and handsome in features. They are far-sighted with a keen intellect.

Those of Vātsyāyana Gotra have five Pravaras.

65-67. They are: (1) Bhārgava, (2) Cyavana, (3) Āpnuvāna, (4) Aurva, and (5) Jamadagnika. O descendant of Bharata, the Pravaras of this (Gotra) have already been mentioned. Those who are born of this Gotra are always engaged in *Pākayajña* (sacrifice with cooked food). They are congenitally avaricious and hot-tempered. They have many progenies. They are engaged in holy baths, liberal monetary gifts etc. They have their sense-organs under control. They build tanks, wells and lakes in thousands. They habitually carry out vows and observances. They appreciate merits. Those who are devoid of Vedic study are fools.

68-70. Those who are born in Kauśika family have three Pravaras. They are: (1) Viśvāmitra, (2) Aghamarṣī, and (3) Kauśika. The Brāhmaṇas of this Gotra are knowers of Brahman (the Absolute). They are quiescent, with perfect control over their sense-organs and are of good conduct. They are devoted to all righteous activities. They are harsh and they do not have sons. They are devoid of splendour (though they are) excellent Brāhmaṇas.

Those who are of the Bhāradvāja Gotra have five Pravaras.

71. Those five Pravaras are: (1) Āṅgirasa, (2) Bārhaspatya, (3) Bhāradvāja, (4) Sainyasa, and (5) Gārgya. These should be known as their five Pravaras.

72-73. The Vāḍavas (Brāhmaṇas) who are born in this Gotra, are splendid ones with ample wealth. They possess good garments, ornaments and jewellery. They are devoted to Brāhmaṇas. All of them are eager to feed Brāhmaṇas. They are engaged in every righteous activity.

Those who are born of Kāśyapa Gotra have three Pravaras.

74-76a. They are the three famous ones: (1) Kāśyapa, (2) Apavatsāra and (3) Raibhya.

The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra are of ruthless red eyes. They are slaves of their tongues (i.e. they are gluttons). All of them are seekers of truth. They are poor and sickly. They are thieves and they speak lies. All of them know the meanings of the scriptures. They are devoid of the Vedas and Smṛtis.

76b-78. The Brāhmaṇas who are born of the family of Śunaka are devoted to meditation. They are Yogins of good penance. They are masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. They are saintly people of good conduct and mode of life. They are devotees of Viṣṇu.

Their body is short in stature. They are of different complexions. They have many wives. They are excellent Brāhmaṇas. They

are compassionate, straightforward and quiescent. They are eager to feed Brāhmaṇas.

79. Those who are born of Śaunakasa have three Pravaras: (1) Bhārgava, (2) Śaunahotra and (3) Gārtsyapramada.

80-82a. O king, the Vāḍavas born of this family are unbearable. They are excessively gigantic, of huge bodies, tall and very haughty. Their appearance shows afflictions (due to difficulties?). They are dark-complexioned. They are clever masters of all scriptures. They eat a lot. They are proud and clever. They are devoid of passion and hatred. They are Brāhmaṇas who are devoted to Brahman. They are handsome and they wear good garments and ornaments.

82b-85. Those who are born of Vasiṣṭha Gotra have three Pravaras. They are: (1) Vasiṣṭha, (2) Bhāradvāja and (3) Indrapramada.

The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra are masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. They perform Yajñas regularly and make others too perform them. Their voice is good. They are fond of happiness and ease. The wealthy are prone to hate others. They are endowed with good qualities and have sons. They are large-hearted, O king, heroic and capable of eliminating their enemies.

Those who are born of the same Gotra as Gautama have five Pravaras.

86-88. They are: (1) Kautsa, (2) Gārgya, (3) Umavāha, (4) Asita, and (5) Devala. The Brāhmaṇas who are born of this Gotra are extremely holy. All of them render help unto others. They are well-versed in the Vedas and Smṛtis. They are crooked. They are hypocrites. They are prone to deceitful activities. They are clever in polemical discussions about different scriptural topics. They are fond of different types of jewellery. They are adepts in the work connected with trees etc. They nurse anger for a long time and are sickly.

89. Those who are born of Āṅgirasa Gotra have three Pravaras: (1) Āṅgirasa, (2) Aṁbarīṣa, and (3) Yauvanāśva the third.

90-92. Those who are born of this Gotra are speakers of truth. They have perfect control over their sense-organs. They are handsome in appearance. Their countenance is splendid. They are moderate in eating. They carry on great vows and observances. They are conversant with the Purāṇas. They are always devoted to make liberal gifts. They are devoid of hatred (though) greedy. They are devoted to the study of the Vedas. They are far-sighted and have great splendour (but) they are deluded by great Māyā.

Those who are of the same Gotra as Śāṇḍila have three Pravaras.

93-95a. They are: (1) Asita, (2) Devala, and (3) Śāṇḍila. The excellent Brāhmaṇas in this Gotra are very fortunate but humpbacked. They have diseases of the eye. They are extremely defiled but are great renouncers. They are not long-lived. They are experts in instigating quarrels. They are eager to amass everything. They are dirty and proud. They are masters of the Science of Planets and Luminaries (Astrology).

95b-99. Those who are born of the same Gotra as Ātreya have five Pravaras. They are: (1) Ātreya, (2) Arcanānasa, (3) Śyāvāśva, (4) Aṅgiras, and (5) Atri. The Brāhmaṇas who are born of this family, have splendour of the sun. All of them are cool like the moon. They are well established in Dharmāraṇya. They are of excellent conduct. They are very intelligent. They are devoted to the Vedas and sacred scriptures. They regularly perform Yajñas. Their behaviour is splendid. They are adherents of truth and cleanliness. They are conversant with righteousness. They habitually make liberal gifts. They are free from dirt and are excessively enthusiastic. They engage themselves in penance and study of the Vedas. They are devoted to justice and righteousness.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

100. Kindly give, O mighty one, the nectarine narrative of Dharmāraṇya, on listening to which one is rid of every terrible sin, even of the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa.

Vyāsa said:

101-103. Listen, O king. I shall narrate this story which is extremely rare to be heard (i.e. rarely narrated). (Once) Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas and others harassed Vāḍavas. There was a Yakṣa named Jṛmbhaka near Dharmāraṇya. He harassed the residents of Dharmāraṇya continuously.

Thereupon the prominent Brāhmaṇas submitted the (following petition) to the Devas:

104. "O Suras, we are being harassed by Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and others. We shall abandon the excellent region today, due to the fear thereof; there is no doubt about it."

105-107. Thereafter Siddhas, excellent Yoginīs including Śrīmātṛ and others were installed on the grounds there for the protection

of the Brāhmaṇas and with a desire for the benefit of all the worlds. One Yoginī was installed then for each Gotra.[1]

It was readily accepted there that the Śakti (power manifestation of Goddess) who is capable of protecting and sustaining a Gotra, is the family Goddess of that Gotra.

108-111. The Gotra-mothers are the following: Śrīmātṛ, Tāraṇīdevī, Āśāpurī, Gotrapā, Icchārtināśinī, Pippalī, Vikāravaśā, Jaganmātā, Mahāmātā, Siddhā, Bhaṭṭārikā, Kadaṁbā, Vikarā, Mīṭhā, Suparṇā, Vasujā, Mataṅgī, Mahādevī, Vāṇī, Mukuṭeśvarī, Bhadrī, Mahāśakti, Saṁhārī, Mahābalā, Cāmuṇḍā the great goddess. They have been installed there for the protection by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others.

112-117a. The prominent Brāhmaṇas worshipped them always. They were ever engaged in their own duties. Since then the Yoginīs were safe in their own time. The Brāhmaṇas regained their normal state surrounded by sons and grandsons. Then Devas and Gandharvas were fully delighted in their minds. They seated themselves in an excellent aerial chariot and went to heaven. They fed themselves on nectar.

After the lapse of a hundred years, O king, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara remembered Dharamāraṇya. They were eager to visit it. At dawn when the sun rose, O king, they came there riding on an aerial chariot. They were served by groups of celestial damsels. Gandharvas sang in praise of them and *Prabodhakas* (those who waken i.e. bards) eulogized them. The Brāhmaṇas of that region, O king, abandoned the hermitages abounding in sacrificial twigs, flowers and Kuśa grass and went away to all the different ten quarters.

117b-121. On seeing the (colony of) hermitages empty Maheśvara, conversant with righteousness, spoke these words (to Viṣṇu): "O lord, the Vāḍavas undergo hardships. In my opinion, we should make arrangements for the rehabilitation of these Brāhmaṇas. Servants should be engaged." On hearing the words of Śaṁbhu Janārdana said: "True. True." After saying this he spoke to Brahmā: "O Brahmā, make arrangements for rendering service to the Brāhmaṇas.

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1. VV 108-111 explain the function of Gotra-devīs or Gotra-mātās of the different Gotras of the Brāhmaṇas in Dharmāraṇya.

The creation should be everlasting. The group of Brāhmaṇas should be happy."

On hearing these words of Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, remembered the cow Kāmadhenu who came there instantaneously to the sacred Dharmāraṇya.

CHAPTER TEN

The Service Rendered by the Merchant Class

Vyāsa said:

1. Listen, O king, to what happened at Dharmāraṇya. It is considered splendid and destructive of all sins. I shall narrate it in the manner it occurred.

2-6. Then, O king, Kāmadhenu was called by the unborn Lord Viṣṇu directed by the self-born Lord Brahmā. He spoke to her, "O mother, kindly give these Brāhmaṇas attendants of pure souls, two attendants per Brāhmaṇa. Be pleased with me." Saying "So be it" the great Cow drenched the ground with her milk. From her vibrant *Huṁ* sound, men with tufts and sacred threads emerged.

Thirty-six thousand Vaṇiks (Merchants) of great strength came out. They had their sacred threads. They were experts in all scriptures and extremely clever. They were devoted to the Brāhmaṇas and eager to render service unto those Brāhmaṇas. They had the inherent power of penance. They were conversant with the Purāṇas. They were righteous and of good conduct. They used to feed the Brāhmaṇas.

7-10. The Devas in heaven praise the inhabitants of Dharmāraṇya. (They are) devoid of lethargy at all times in the matter of performance of penance, study of the Vedas and giving liberal gifts. For each one of the Vāḍavas two servants were given. O king, the same is the Gotra of the servant as that of the Vāḍava mentioned before. After having made this arrangement, they made their residence in the lands there. Then the status of discipleship was granted to the servants by the Devas. Everything conducive to their welfare was spoken by Brahmā:

11-17. "Carry out the instructions of these people. Whatever they desire, give it unto them. Bring sacrificial twigs, flowers, Darbha grass etc. everyday. Behave according to their behests. Do everything with their permission. Do not insult them at any time. The post-natal rites, naming ceremony, feeding-rite that is auspicious, tonsure rite, investiture with the sacred thread, the rite of Mahānāmnī (in which the Mahānāmnī verses are recited) etc., all types of observances and holy rites, charitable gifts, fasts etc.—all these should be performed only with their permission. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva have said thus: 'If anyone performs without their permission any rite such as the new-moon day rite, Śrāddha rites etc., whether the rite be auspicious or inauspicious, he shall always be faced with penury, death of a son, loss of reputation, affliction with bodily ailments etc. He will never be happy at all.'" Then the excellent Devas including Śakra said, "So it shall be." Then the Devas Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara became contented on realising their desires. They stood in front of Kāmadhenu and eulogized her:

18-20. "You are the mother of all Devas. You are the cause of all Yajñas. You are the holiest of all holy spots. Obeisance to you who are always faultless. The Moon, the Sun and Aruṇa (the charioteer of the Sun) are in your forehead; the Bull-bannered Lord and Sarasvatī are in your Huṁkāra (the sound of *Huṁ*); all the serpents are in the hairs on your body; Gandharvas are on the back of your hoof. The four Vedas, all the holy spots and all the mobile and immobile beings are at the tip of your mouth."

21. The Holy Cow who was propitiated with many words of praise like these became delighted and said, "What shall I do?"

The Devas said:

22. All these splendid attendants have been created by you, O mother goddess. O auspicious one, the Brāhmaṇas have become happy with your favour.

23. Thereupon, O king, the Divine Cow of great renown went to heaven. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others vanished there itself.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

24. Those attendants of great brilliance who were born of the

Divine Cow were without wives. O holy Sir, when were they united in wedlock and when did they beget sons?

Vyāsa said:

25. Gandharva damsels were brought and given as wives unto them by Rudra and Yama.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

26. Tell me who was that Gandharva king? What was his name? Where did he reside? How many were his daughters? What was their mode of behaviour?

Vyāsa said:

27. The lord of Gandharvas was well-known as Viśvāvasu, O king. There were sixty thousand girls in his abode.

28. His splendid Gandharva city in the sky was his abode. The girls born of that Gandharva were splendid and lovely. They were (ever) in their prime of youth.

29. O king, Nandī and Bhṛṅgī, the auspicious-faced attendants of Rudra, spoke to Śiva about those girls seen (by them) previously:

30-31a. "O Lord Mahādeva, thousand, nay, innumerable girls were seen previously (by us) in the Gandharva city, the abode of Viśvāvasu. Bring them even by using force and give them to those attendants created by the Divine Cow."

31b-36. On hearing these words, Lord Sadāśiva, the destroyer of three cities, sent a messenger named Vijaya, O descendants of Bharata. He went to the place where Viśvāvasu, the suppressor of enemies, was seated. He communicated these words of wholesome import as spoken by Śiva: "O blessed one, Brāhmaṇas were created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva in Dharmāraṇya. They were masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and were established there. The Divine Cow, Kāmadhenu, was requested for attendants on their behalf. Vaiśyas not born of any womb were created by the Divine Cow. They are young men of righteous conduct, great strength and their number comes to thirty-six thousand.

I have been sent by Śiva to you. I have approached you, O blessed one, for the sake of those girls. Give them. Give them immediately." So said he.

The Gandharva said:

37. O highly intelligent one! How can I ignore all Devas and Gandharvas and give them unto human beings in the mundane world?

38. On hearing his words, Vijaya returned and reported fully the activities (and speech of) of the Gandharva to Śiva.

Vyāsa said:

39-42. Thereupon, Lord Sadāśiva, the benefactor of the worlds, became very angry. With his trident in his hand he rode on his bull surrounded by the Bhūtas (spirits), Pretas (ghosts), Piśācas (vampires) and other beings in thousands. Then the Devas, Serpents, Bhūtas, Vetālas (evil spirits) and other sky-walkers came there in their thousands extremely infuriated. When that great army moved ahead, there was a tumultuous sound. Goddess Earth trembled. The Guardians of the Quarters became afraid; Wind became turbulent and violent; the Elephants of the Quarters began to trumpet.

Vyāsa said:

43. On seeing that great army approaching all the people fled to the ten quarters from the Gandharva city in their great fright.

44-45. The king of Gandharvas abandoned his city and went to Meru, O king. (The lord) took the girls who were in their prime of youth and endowed with beauty and liberal-mindedness. He gave all of them to the Vaiśyas. O king, he gave them (in marriage) according to the manner laid down in the Vedas, in the presence of the Devas.

46-47. Then the sons of the Divine Cow gave the respective shares in the ghee-offerings to the Gandharva, the Devas, the ancestors, the Sun, the Moon and to Yama, the god of death. After the due offerings of shares in the clarified butter, they wooed the girls of splendid observances.

48. Thenceforth whenever a Gandharva type of marriage rite (i.e. rite of marriage when a bride and a groom love each other and unite themselves in wedlock) is imminent (the lords) take their due shares in the clarified butter.

49. The thirty-six thousand young men, of whom mention has been made, had hundreds and thousands of sons and grandsons.

50. Therefore all those girls too were held in bondage. Kṣatriyas of great heroism too were created for service.

51. Then all the Devas went away as before, O king. When the Devas had gone, all those Brāhmaṇas continued to stay in this region.

52. In the company of their sons and grandsons, O king, they lived without any fear from any quarter. Those who were conversant with the Vedas recited the Vedas and held hermeneutical discussions in some places.

53. Some of them recited the prayers (*Sūktas*) of Viṣṇu, some those of Śiva and others of Brahmā. Some recited hymns to Yama.

54. O virtuous king, sacrificial priests performed sacrifices. Some performed *Agnihotra* along with *Svāhākāra, Svadhākāra* and *Vaṣaṭkāra* (i.e. different symbolic sounds).

55. The three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings were filled with those sounds. The Vaiśyas of great cleverness were eager to serve the Brāhmaṇas.

56-57. Those Vaiśyas, the sons of the Divine Cow, began to dwell in the divine and splendid Dharmāraṇya with great steadfastness (in holy activities). They regularly supplied the Brāhmaṇas with everything such as food and drink, sacrificial twigs, Darbha grass, fruits etc.

58-60. Wreathing of the garlands of flowers etc., washing of bath-garments etc., preparing of dung cakes etc. (for burning), purifying activities like scrubbing etc., cutting, pounding etc. were done by the womenfolk of the Vaiśyas. They thus rendered services to those Brāhmaṇas in accordance with the behests of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

All the Brāhmaṇas were then very happy and peacefully settled. They continued the worship of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva during days and nights and at dusks and dawns.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Dharmāraṇya Becomes Satyamandira

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Kindly narrate what transpired thereafter, O excellent one among the twice-borns. Having drunk your nectarine speech, I find no satiety yet, O Lord.

Vyāsa said:

2. After some time, at the close of the (previous) Yuga and the beginning of Tretā Yuga, there was a king of Rākṣasas named Lolajihvākṣa.

3. All the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings were driven away by him. After conquering all the worlds, he came to Dharmāraṇya.

4. He saw the entire holy region charming and inhabited by the twice-borns. Because of his hatred for Brāhmaṇas, the excellent city was burnt down by him.

5. On seeing the city burning, the excellent Brāhmaṇas, the residents of Dharmāraṇya, went abroad whence they had come and got dispersed.

6. Goddesses Śrīmātā and others became infuriated at the Rākṣasa. They threatened the Rākṣasa with words of taunt and began to kill.

7-11. Thereupon, hundreds and thousands of the goddesses rose up. Some of them held aloft excellent tridents. Others held conchs, discuses and clubs Some had Kamaṇḍalus (holy water-pots). Others held whips and swords. Some held nooses and goads. A few had swords and shields. One of them had an axe in her hand. Another held divine weapons. They were adorned with many ornaments and jewellery. (All of them) were brilliant with different kinds of gems. For the destruction of the Rākṣasas and for the welfare of the Brāhmaṇas, they came to the place where the demon Lolajihva was present. He had huge fangs and body. He was terrible with his tongue sparkling like lightning. On seeing them, the Rākṣasa roared like a lion.

12. All the three worlds were struck with fear on hearing that loud report. All the quarters were filled with it stirring up many an ocean.

13. Then there arose an excessively tumultuous noise in Dharmāraṇya, O king. On hearing it Nalakūbara was despatched by Indra.

14. "See what is this (tumult). Go and find out and inform me." On hearing these words of his, Nalakūbara set out.

15. On seeing there the great fight between Śrī-Mātā (Mother Divine) and Lolajihva, he went and reported to Indra everything as it happened and was seen.

16. "Having gone to Dharmāraṇya from here, he has begun to harass the three worlds." On hearing it, Indra informed Viṣṇu thus and went to the earth:

17-18. "That beautiful city unobtainable even to the Devas has been burnt. The Brāhmaṇas are not to be seen there. They have gone away in various directions. The Mother Divine, the great Yoginī, is fighting there valiantly. All the subjects, crying out *Hā Hā*, are running about helter-skelter."

19. On hearing it, O king, Vāsudeva took up his discus Sudarśana and came down to the earth from Satyaloka (Vaikuṇṭha?).

20. He went to Dharmāraṇya and hurled that discus. Thereupon the demon Lolajihva fell down and lost consciousness.

21. Pierced by the trident and spears, he became extremely infuriated. Being struck then, he gave up his life and went to the firmament above.

22. Then the Devas who had come from Satyaloka along with Gandharvas, became extremely delighted in their minds. They eulogized the Lord of the universe.

23. On seeing it devoid of inhabitants, Viṣṇu spoke these words: "Where are all those Brāhmaṇas residing in the hermitages of the sages?"

24. Then the Devas and Gandharvas searched for those Brāhmaṇas who had fled in different directions quickly and spoke to them thus, O king:

25. "O Brāhmaṇas, may our words be heard. The base Rākṣasa has been killed by Lord Vāsudeva. He has been chopped off by means of the discus."

26. On hearing it, all the Brāhmaṇas were delighted and their eyes gleamed. Then, O king, they returned and entered their respective places of occupation.

27-28. Then these pleasing words were addressed to the Consort of Goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī): "You, the Lord of the universe have

come down from Satyaloka and reestablished this city for the welfare of the twice-born. This will be well-known in the world as *Satyamandira* ('Abode of Truth'). It (shall be known) as Dharmāraṇya in Kṛta Yuga and Satyamandira in Tretā Yuga."

29-31. On hearing it Vāsudeva said, "Let it be so." Then those Brāhmaṇas lived there as before, along with their sons, grandsons, wives and attendants. They continued to perform penances, sacrifices, study of the Vedas etc. Thus, O Dharma, everything regarding Satyamandira has been recounted to you.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Installation of Gaṇeśa

Vyāsa said:

1. Thereafter, O excellent king, the temple Satyamandira was established by the Devas for the sake of general protection. Only from then has that city been named 'Satya'.

2. Lord Dharmeśvara was installed in the East; Gaṇādhipa in the South; the Sun in the West and the Self-born Lord in the North.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. By whom was Gaṇeśa installed? Why did he instal him? O blessed one, what special name has been given to him? Narrate these to me without delay.

Vyāsa said:

4-6a. Now, I shall state the cause of the birth of Geṇeśa. O great king, all the Devas and Mother Deities gathered together once in Dharmāraṇya and the son of Caṇḍikā was installed at the outset by the Devas on the ground of the womenfolk of Satya (city). There was a rampart there resplendent with flags and festoons. In the abode of Brāhmaṇas, in the midst of the circular rampart, a pedestal was built with bricks beautifully.

6b-9. The principal paths were four in number. They were clean and decorated with festoons. Lord Dharmeśvara was installed in the East; Gaṇanāyaka in the South; the Sun was installed in the West and the Self-born Lord in the North. The story of the origin of Dharmeśvara has already been told to you.

10-12. Now I shall state to you the cause of the birth of Gaṇeśa.[1] Once Pārvatī applied unguent all over her body; she scraped it and held it in her hand. Thereafter she made an image thereof which she found very handsome. She inspired it with life. The (boy) got up in front of her and asked the mother: "What shall I do at your behest?"

Pārvatī said:

13-14. While I take my bath you stand at the doorway. (You may keep) all sorts of weapons axe, and other things. As long as you stand at the doorway, let no one cause any hindrance.

On being told thus by the great goddess, he stood there at the doorway with the weapons (in the hands).

15. In the meanwhile, Lord Mahādeva came there. The great Lord desired to go inside.

16. Entry was refused to him by Gaṇeśa who was standing at the doorway. This infuriated Lord Mahādeva. They fought each other.

17-19 As though they were desirous of killing each other, both of them fought together. (Gaṇeśa) hit the forehead of the Lord with the exquisite axe. Thereupon Lord Mahādeva raised his trident and struck his head with it. It fell down on the ground.

On seeing her son fallen on the ground, Pārvatī cried. When he fell down, there was a great hue and cry.

20. On seeing Pārvatī extremely agitated, Maheśvara, the lord of Devas, thought thus: 'What wrong deed has been done by me!'

21-22. In the meantime he saw there the demon Gajāsura. On seeing the great demon, Lord Śiva, the sole lord worshipped by the entire world, hit his head. He took hold of it and stuck it to the son created by Pārvatī. He stood up there in the presence of the great Lord, along with his hosts of attendants.

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1. VV 10 23 give how Gaṇeśa became elephant-headed (Gajānana).

23. Then he assigned the obvious name *Gajānana* ('Elephant-faced') to him. All the Suras and sages gathered together with great delight.

24. With great eulogies, they praised him continuously. "If anyone sells the entire family (property) in exchange for sweet-meat (offered to Gajānana), he (the Lord) will bring about the welfare of the entire family.

25. The Self-born Lord (Brahmā) worshipped the Single-tusked Ekadanta, Pīvara (the stout one), the great lord worshipped by the Suras, on the southern road.

26-27. He worshipped the Lord with matted locks of hair, short in stature, with a serpent for a sacred thread, who was three-eyed and huge-bodied, holding in his hand a flagstaff and an axe; he was holding a lotus-flower in his hand; he destroyed all obstacles. He was installed to the south of the town for the protection of the people.

28-29. The lord was highly pleased; he was the leader of the hosts (Gaṇas). He was bowed down to by Siddhi and Buddhi. He had the splendour of saffron. He was the most excellent of all Suras. He was brilliant and he held a sharp goad. The lord of the immortal ones bowed down to the lord who was worshipped with hundreds of excellent flowers. Thereafter the Suras bowed down to him with great devotion and eulogized him.

The Devas praised:

30-31. Obeisance to you, the lord of Suras; obeisance to the lord of the hosts; O Elephant-faced One, bow to you, O superintending deity of the great Devas. O leader of the hosts, obeisance to you, the lord fond of your devotees.

The lord of the hosts who was eulogized by means of these splendid prayers became highly pleased. Then he spoke these words.

Gaṇādhyakṣa ('Leader of the Hosts') said:

32-36. I am pleased with you all, O Suras. Tell me what you desire. I shall give it unto you.

The Devas said:

O auspicious one, O lord, stay here only and carry out our task.

O Gaṇeśvara, always be the protector of all the Brāhmaṇas, merchants and other inhabitants of Dharmāraṇya. They are righteous and fully endowed with the qualities of celibacy etc. Be the protector of the people of all castes and stages of life as well as of others. With your favour, O blessed one, may all the Brāhmaṇas be endowed with happiness and wealth. May all the merchants be very powerful always. They are to be protected by you, O lord, as long as the sun, the moon and the earth exist.

The great lord, the lord of the hosts said: "So be it."

37-39. The Devas became delighted. They began to worship the lord of the hosts. Thereupon, the Devas who were delighted and all the human beings in the world worshipped him with propitiatory things like flowers, incense etc. for the sake of ridding themselves of obstacles.

"Be worshipped at the outset before all, in the course of the rites of marriages, festivities and sacrifices. Be gracious always unto the residents of Dharmāraṇya."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Greatness of Bakulārka

Vyāsa said:

1. The son of Kāśyapa was installed to the west of (the idol of) Śaṁbhu. O blessed one, it is what is called Ravikṣetra ('the region of the Sun-god').

2. The great divine beings, Aśvins, otherwise called Nāsatyas, were born there. They are endowed with (perpetual) beauty and youth. These two gods are well reputed as dispellers of ailments.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3. O blessed grandfather, be pleased to tell in detail. How did it come about that Aśvins were born in the mortal world?

4-5. How did the Sun come down from the solar world to the

earth? Please try to tell all these things in detail. O blessed one, everyone shall be released from all sins on hearing it.

Vyāsa said:[1]

6-7. O king, you have asked well about the events of the higher world. O tiger among men, one is rid of all ailments on listening to it. Saṁjñā, the daughter of Viśvakarman, was wooed by Ravi, the Sun, of many resplendent rays. Since, on seeing the Sun, Saṁjñā always closed her eyes, the infuriated Sun spoke to her these words:

The Sun said:

8. Since you have been closing your eyes always on seeing me, O deluded woman, Yama, the controller of the subjects, will be born of you.

9-10. Thereafter the lady glanced at him agitatedly due to fear. On seeing her with tremulous eyes, the Sun said to her: "O Saṁjñā, on seeing me you turned away your tremulous glance. Hence you will give birth to a daughter of unsteady features."

Vyāsa said:

11. Due to the curse of her husband, a son, Yama, and a daughter, Yamunā, were born to her. The latter is the well-known great river.

12. The beautiful lady Saṁjñā could not bear the great refulgence of the Sun. In that state, she thought thus:

13. 'What shall I do? Where can I go? Whereby can I get some relief? How will the anger of the Sun, my husband, subside?'

14. Thinking thus on various occasions that blessed daughter of the patriarch Viśvakarmā better decided (to go to her father) and sought refuge in her father.

15-17. Having come to the decision of going to her paternal house the lady of good repute called her own reflection. That noble lady, the beloved of the Sun, spoke to her: "You shall stay

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1. VV 6-54 give the story of Saṁjñā and birth of Aśvinīkumāras. It is given in Mbh, *Ādi* 66.35 and *Anu.* 150.17-18; also in VP III, Ch. 2.

here in the abode of the Sun in the same manner as I (did). Further, you should behave well with the children as well as with the Sun. No wicked statement shall be pronounced by you so that I will be duly honoured. O sinless one, you shall also say, 'I am Saṁjñā herself'." (The way in which you speak should not provoke any doubt about your identity.)

The Shadow Saṁjñā said:

18. I shall carry out what you instruct me to do as long as no one catches hold of my tresses and curses me. I shall say so, till they drag me by the tresses.

19. On being assured thus by her, that noble lady went to the abode of her father. There she saw Tvaṣṭṛ who had rid himself of all sins by means of austerity.

20. She was duly honoured by Viśvakarman and that blameless lady stayed in her father's abode for some time.

21. Then the father, Viśvakarman, conversant with righteousness, spoke respectfully and lovingly to his daughter who had stayed there for a long time:

22-25. "Dear daughter, I have been seeing you here for many days, though these days have appeared like an hour, *Muhūrta* (due to the filial affection), but this is causing loss of righteousness.

Staying with kinsmen for a long time is not conducive to the good reputation of women, although they may desire to have the bride at the father's place.

Dear daughter, you have been united in wedlock with the Sun, the lord of the three worlds. Hence it does not behove you to live for long at your father's abode.

Hence you go back to your husband's place. I have seen you and duly honoured you, O girl of splendid eyes, you should come here again and meet me."

Vyāsa said:

26. O sage, on being spoken thus, she promptly said "It will be so". She duly venerated her father and went to Northern Kurus.

27. Not favourably disposed towards the blazing heat of the Sun and afraid of his refulgence, she performed penance there, in the guise of a mare.

28. Considering the second lady to be Saṁjñā herself, the Sun begot of her two sons and a charming daughter.

29. The Shadow-Lady did not behave lovingly towards the daughter and the two sons of Saṁjñā in the same manner as towards her own children. There was partiality in the manner of fondling and feeding (them) everyday.

30. Manu was ready to forgive this behaviour on her part, but not so in the case of Yama. He even raised his leg to kick her angrily. He later controlled his mind and hence did not actually touch her body with his foot.

31. Then, O king, the Shadow-Saṁjñā angrily cursed Yama with her lips throbbing with anger and gesticulating (to strike) with her hand:

32. "Since you raised forcefully your foot towards me, the wife of your father, that foot shall fall to the ground this day itself."

33. On hearing this curse, Yama became very suspicious about his mother. He approached his father, bowed down to him and said:

34-35. "O father, this is extremely wonderful. It is not to be seen anywhere that a mother should curse her son without any endearing affection. This mother does not speak to me in the same way as my real mother. A (real) mother can never be devoid of good qualities towards her sons, even if they are devoid of good qualities."

36. On hearing these words of Yama, the Sun, the dispeller of darkness, called the Shadow-Saṁjñā and asked her, "Where has she gone?"

37. She said, "I am the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ, O refulgent one. I am your wife Saṁjñā. These children were begotten of me by you."

38. Despite the fact that the Sun asked her many times, she did not tell the real fact. Thereupon, the Sun was about to curse her.

39. At that, she stated everything to Vivasvān in the manner it happened. On coming to know everything, the lord went to the abode of Tvaṣṭṛ.

40. Then Tvaṣṭṛ worshipped the Sun, honoured by all the three worlds: "O refulgent one, why have you come to the abode without your Śakti?"

41. He then asked him about Saṁjñā. (Tvaṣṭṛ) who knew the truth told him everything: "O Ravi, she had come to my abode on being sent by you."

42. The Sun went in deep meditation and saw her performing penance in the guise of a mare in the Northern Kurus.

43-47a. She was unable to endure the brilliance of the Sun. She was much oppressed by it. She left back her fiery brilliance in the form of a shadow and came to Dharmāraṇya. She performed a very difficult penance. O king, the Sun saw Śani, the son of the Shadow-Lady, as well as Yama and the other one (Manu) (of Saṁjñā) and became surprised. On seeing the wicked sons, he was absorbed in meditation for a while to find out the real cause thereof. He understood the reason. 'That chaste lady had her body scorched due to the heat of the rays. Since she could not bear to look at me of excessively unendurable brilliance, she began to perform penance. Fifty years have elapsed since she had gone to the earth and performed penance.'

47b-51. After reflecting thus the shining god (Sun) hastened to the holy forest of Dharmāraṇya where Saṁjñā was performing penance. On seeing the Sun come, the wife of the Sun became (i.e. assumed the form of) a mare. The Sun transformed himself into a horse. The penis was introduced into the nostril and thus their union took place. Thereupon the twin gods Aśvins were born on the earth. When the surface of the ground was dug up by the right hoof, water flowed out and a pool was formed. The second pool resulted from the hind leg.

52-54. The sage announced that the same meritorious fruit accrued in the Kuṇḍa here as accrued to one in the rivers flowing to the north at Kurukṣetra and at the town (Vārāṇasī) on Gaṅgā. There is no doubt that one merits the same benefit after taking a holy dip in Taptakuṇḍa. He is rid of all sins. The body is never afflicted with sickness such as leprosy etc. Thus, O king, the cause of the birth of Aśvins has been narrated unto you.

55-57. Then, O king, the Devas including Brahmā came there. Boons, more than ever contemplated by Saṁjñā, were given by them to Saṁjñā. They installed the Sun-god as the lord of the forest groove named Bakula. Saṁjñā assumed her previous form. She was installed like a queen. So also the twin gods. O king of great intellect, listen, I shall tell the benefit accruing from this holy shrine of pilgrimage.

58-62. The initial spot, O foremost one among the descendants of Kuru, is inaccessible even to gods. A man who takes his holy bath in Ravikuṇḍa with all the sense-organs under control and possessing real faith, shall redeem all the Manes even if they had fallen in great hells. If a man offers libations to the Manes and the Devas and drinks the sacred water faithfully, whether it be very little or fairly much, it shall become magnified up to ten million times. On the seventh lunar day in conjunction with Sunday or at the time of the lunar or solar eclipse, if people take bath in Ravikuṇḍa, they will never be born in a womb again.

If a man takes the holy dip on the day of the transit of the Sun, on *Vyatīpāta*, on *Vaidhṛta*, on the full-moon day, on the new-moon day, on the fourteenth day of the dark or bright half of a month, in Ravikuṇḍa, he shall obtain the benefit of ten million sacrifices.

63-64. If a man worships Bakulārka with single-minded attention, he attains the highest abode. His prosperity and glory shall be stable as long as the Sun blazes. He shall obtain happiness and progeny. With the favour of the Sun-god all the hosts of his enemies become extinct.

65. He has no fear from fire, tiger or elephant. Nor need he be afraid of serpents, evil spirits, ghosts and others.

66. All the Bālagrahas (demons and malignant Planets afflicting children), Revatī, Vṛddharevatī etc. become destroyed. O Bakulārka, obeisance unto you.

67. When Bakulārka is duly revered and bowed to, the devotee's cows flourish, so also his wealth and granary. His lineage is never broken.

68-69. O king, if women take bath in the Kuṇḍa, all the defects are dispelled such as the state of a woman having only a single progeny or no progeny or the child being dead, or she becoming barren, or the woman being ugly or becoming Vīṣakanyā ('poison girl'). The man enjoys conjugal bliss and begets sons and becomes very beautiful.

70. A man afflicted with any sickness or ailment becomes rid of all illness within six months, if he takes his holy dip in Ravikuṇḍa.

71. If a devotee performs the rite of letting free a dark-coloured bull at Ravikuṇḍa, his Manes become pleased as long as the time of the destruction of all living beings.

72. O son, if a man performs the rite of gifting away (in marriage) a virgin in this holy spot, he becomes a purified soul

by means of that holy wedlock and he is honoured in the world of Brahmā.

73-76. Many things can be gifted away in this holy spot such as a cow made of gingelly seeds, O descendant of Bharata, sandals, umbrella, things according protection from chilliness etc. Rites of *Lakṣa Homa* ('making sacrificial offerings a hundred thousand times'), Rudra and Atirudra rites etc. should be performed there. I shall, O dear one, state correctly the benefit of every donation made in that holy spot with adequate faith. Listen to it. By the donation referred to, the devotee acquires enjoyment in this world as well as hereafter.

77. By performing the rite of marriage a man acquires a kingdom. There is no doubt about this that all virtues, riches and desires pertaining to human beings are acquired through a wife.

78-79. Happiness is derived from worship. That pleasure is obtained in every birth. If a man remembers Bakulārka on the seventh lunar day falling on a Sunday, he need not be afraid of fever etc., enemies and sickness.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

80. O sage, how did the Sun get the name of Bakulārka. O most excellent one of eloquent persons, it behoves you to narrate the truth.

Vyāsa said:

81-83. In order to reduce the severity of the refulgence of her lord, O eminent king, Saṁjñā performed the penance with due regard for Sun, beneath a tree of Bakula (*Minsusops elengi*). On seeing the Sun come forth, she became a mare. The refulgent Sun became cooled down excessively near the Bakula. Then the queen gave birth to two divine, charming sons. Hence the Sun here became well-known as Bakulārka.

84-85. He who takes bath there is not afflicted with illness. Undoubtedly he gets virtue (*Dharma*), love (*Kāma*) and wealth (*Artha*). Within six months he gains fulfilment of his desires. He gets salvation too. Thus, O great king, the greatness of Bakulārka has been narrated.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

*Destruction of Viṣṇu's Head**

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O blessed one, O ocean of compassion, O lord of the gods, O omnipresent one, when was penance performed here by Viṣṇu of unmeasured refulgence. Further narrate to me in the proper sequence everything that was stated by Śiva, the noble soul, to Skanda.

Vyāsa said:

3. Listen, O dear one. O excellent king, once upon a time penance was performed here by Viṣṇu of unmeasured refulgence.

Skanda said:

4. How can the Divine lake Paṁpā, Caṁpā and Gayā be superior to Vārāṇasī and how did Hari become a horse-faced one?

Īśvara said:

5-6. Here Lord Nārāyaṇa performed a very difficult penance for three hundred divine years. He became excellent in face. O dear son, the great Viṣṇu performed penance for the sake of excellent form. O excessively brilliant one, in that spot of Siddhas, Hari became horse-faced.

Skanda said:

7. Now you tell us the reason why Hari became horse-faced. He is the lord of gods. He is the lord of the universe and he is the destroyer of a great enemy.

8-10. O auspicious one! By (uttering) his (very) name, masses of sins get dissolved quickly like the (disappearance of) darkness after sunrise. Verily his miraculously wonderful exploits are heard. The supreme god is the cause of individual souls of all, in the form of vital breath. How can such a god be transformed into a horse?

*This chapter and the next describe Viṣṇu's transformation as a horse-necked god.

He is glorified as a single-formed one in the Tantras.

11-12. He can be approached through devotion. He is always pure and he is happiness incarnate unto those who are virtuous. He is beyond the *Guṇas*. He is eternal and all-pervasive and also devoid of all attributes. He is the creator, protector and destroyer. He is unmanifest unto all embodied ones. He is favourable to everyone. He is excessively refulgent. How did he become horse-faced?

13-15. Devas, Serpents, mountains, trees etc. are born of his hairs. In every Kalpa, the entire universe is born of his person. He alone is the origin of the universe. He alone is its ultimate cause. It is by him that the sciences and sacrificial rites that had become extinct, were revived. The wicked demon who attempted (to take away) the Vedas was killed by him. Such was the great Viṣṇu. How did he become horse-faced?

16-21. The gem-wombed earth has been held by him sportingly on his back. The entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings was made by him duty-bound and well-ordered. He is the lord of universal forms. How did he become horse-faced?

He is the slayer of Hiraṇyākṣa. He, of great brilliance, assumed the highly sacred form of the boar and entered the watery ocean. The entire earth along with the oceans and mountains has been lifted up by him sportively on the tip of his tusk. He assumed the brownish form of the boar that destroys all sorrows. How did that divine lord come to be Hayagrīva ('Horse-necked')?

For the sake of Prahlāda that Lord assumed a terrible form of the Man-lion of great brilliance, destructive of all wicked ones. He protected the excellent devotee in the midst of fires, mountains and oceans.

22-26. At the time of dusk he slew Hiraṇyakaśipu, the wicked one. He installed Prahlāda in the seat of Indra which accorded pleasure to him. Indeed, it was for Prahlāda's sake that he assumed the form of the Man-lion.

He would also become a suppliant in front of Virocana's son (i.e. Bali). He was duly honoured by Bali in the horse-sacrifice. Measuring the earth and firmament with three steps, he took away the earth. He assumed the Cosmic Form and hurled Bali into the nether region.

(As Paraśurāma) he, of extremely exalted energy, killed Kṣatriyas twenty-one times all over the world and gave the earth unto Brāhmaṇas.

Haihaya king Sahasrārjuna was killed by him. So also he killed his own mother.

27. (As Rāma) even as a child the wicked demoness in the world named Tāḍakā was killed by Him, due to the favour of Kauśika (Viśvāmitra).

28. At the holy sacrifice of Viśvāmitra, he assumed playfully the form of a human being and slew fourteen thousand Rākṣasas with his own prowess.

29-31. Śūrpaṇakhā was killed (?) and Triśiras was smitten down. He killed Vālin of excellent neck and with the help of Sugrīva made the bridge on the ocean. He killed Rāvaṇa in battle and having reached Dharmāraṇya, he adored the Brāhmaṇas. He granted royal decrees to excellent Brāhmaṇas assigning many villages to them. After taking the holy dip in Dharmavāpī he gifted many cows.

32-36. After protecting the good ones for the sake of curbing the wicked ones, he performed these and many other well-known exploits out of mere sport. How did that lord become horse-faced?

He was born in the Yādava race and he slew Pūtanā, Śakaṭa, demon Ariṣṭa, Keśin, demon Vṛka, demon Baka, demon Śalaṭa (?), the great demon Tṛṇāvarta and Dhenuka. He killed the wrestler Malla, Kaṁsa and Jarāsandha (?) How did that slayer of Kālayavana become horse-faced?

He vanquished demon Naraka in battle, subjugated sixty thousand cities (?). He married sixteen thousand maidens. After performing all these super-human deeds, how did he become horse-faced?

37-38. He is the protector of all devotees and the slayer of all wicked ones. He establishes virtue (Dharma) as Kalki and is stationed in the firmament (in the seat of Viṣṇu). What you have revealed is highly surprising. O destroyer of Tripuras, narrate all these to me. What is the cause thereof?

Śrī Rudra said:

39. O mighty-armed one, you have asked well (a pertinent question). I shall tell you the reason of Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu)'s being horse-faced. Listen attentively.

Vyāsa said:

40-43. Formerly, a Yajña (sacrifice) was begun verily on the

earth by the Devas. All of them with Rudra at the head, wanted to invoke (Viṣṇu) through Vedic Mantras. They went to Vaikuṇṭha, his own abode, the Milky Ocean as well as the nether regions. Even after going there they could not see Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) (there). All of them were overpowered by delusion and ran about here and there. Janārdana of the Brahman form could not be seen by them. All the Devas with Indra at their head began to ponder over this, 'Where has this Viṣṇu gone? By what means can he be seen?'

44. Bowing down to Bṛhaspati ('Master of Speech') they respectfully submitted: "Oh, be pleased to tell us (the whereabouts) of Mahāviṣṇu, the lord of Devas."

Bṛhaspati said:

45. I do not know why Acyuta, Hari, the Supreme Soul has become *Yogārūḍha* ('merged in the Yogic abstraction and absorption'). Viṣṇu is the lord of Yogins, Yoga personified.

46. Meditating for a short while within himself Hari was revealed to Dhiṣaṇa (Bṛhaspati). All the Devas went to the place where the lord of the universe was present.

47-48. Then Janārdana, the great Viṣṇu, was seen engaged in meditation. After seeing the slayer of demons armed with an arrow, having the form befitting his activity and occupying a level ground, he (Bṛhaspati) reflected and tried to find out a means of waking him up. He then said to them: "If the white ants could with effort cut the bowstring, then Hari may wake up by himself hearing that sound."

The Devas said:

49. O ants, we wish to perform a holy sacrifice. Be pleased to gnaw at the bowstring whereby Hari will wake up. We shall then request the lord.

The ants said:

50. A person who causes disturbance to sleep, interruption to a (holy) story, split in the affection of wedded couples and separation of an infant from its mother, shall go to hell.

51. The lord of the universe is in Yogic absorption. The extremely powerful lord is in ecstatic meditation. We shall not cause any

hindrance to that lord of the universe.

Brahmā said:

52. The ability of ye all to nibble at anything may bring about the fulfilment of the task of gods. Therefore, O ants, that should be carried out, so that the Yajña can be concluded successfully.

The queen of the ants, O dear one, said to them again:

The Ant said:

53-56. The lord of the universe is very difficult to control. He is like the Malaya breeze. He is honoured and revered by the gods. How can he be wakened by us, O Brāhmaṇa? We have nothing to do either with the Yajña or with the Devas. (Hence) let the Suras (Devas) give unto me a share in all the rites of Yajña.

The Devas said:

We shall always give a share to *Vamrīs* (ants) in Yajñas. We have (already) given for the sacrifice. So carry out what we have requested for.

Brahmā too said, "So be it." The *Vamrī* too began its endeavour (of nibbling). So, O king, the act of nibbling at the bowstring and similar activities were carried out.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

57. O son of Satyavatī, O Brāhmaṇa-Sage, this waking him by the snapping of the bowstring during the meditation process would be really wonderful.

Vyāsa said:

58. The minds of all the Devas were too much engrossed. The bow of Hari had been drawn fully. I do not know whereby they had been deluded by the Māyā of Viṣṇu.

59. They were delighted (i.e. the ants?) and hurled (i.e. quickly built up) anthill in front of Hari. An anthill on a par with a mountain was raised to the tip of the bow.

60-61. The moment that the defiled bow-string was gnawed out,

the head (of Viṣṇu) was instantaneously chopped off by the tip of the bow and went to heaven (along with it). When the head vanished, the Devas became full of anxiety and they ran about here and there in search of the head.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Story of Hayagrīva

Vyāsa said:

1-2. The Devas including Brahmā were not able to see the head (of Viṣṇu). They who were endowed with knowledge began to think, 'What shall we do?' Then in the company of the Devas, Brahmā said to Viśvakarman:

Brahmā said:

3-5. O powerful Viśvakarman, you alone can always execute an action. Hence hasten to make the head of the Bowman compact (fit).

The divine architect was bowed to and eulogized. With great devotion he spoke to the lotus-born Brahmā: "After getting the rite of the Yajña concluded through my effort, the Devas say different things. They have deprived me of the share in the Yajña. What shall I say before you? O Lord, may I get a share in the Yajña along with the Suras?"

Brahmā said:

6-7a. O architect of gods, I shall set apart a share unto you in all the Yajñas. O mighty hero, you are honoured at the outset in the Soma sacrifice by persons well-versed in the Vedas. Hence, O celestial architect, join the head of Viṣṇu.

7b. Then Viśvakarmā said to the Devas, "Bring the head."

8-10. Then, O excellent king, all the Devas said, "That is what we do not have."

At midday the Sun became (steady) seated in the chariot in the firmament. His horse was seen by all the Suras. They detached

the horse from the chariot. O king, they cut off the head of the horse and Viśvakarman joined it to the headless trunk of Viṣṇu. Indeed he was very clever. Looking at the lord of the chiefs of Devas, the Suras began the eulogy.

The Devas said:

11-18. Obeisance unto you, O seed of the universe. Hail to you, O lord of Kamalā (Lakṣmī). Obeisance to you, O lord of Suras. Bow to you, O lotus-eyed one.

In you abide all living beings. You alone are the refuge unto good people. You are the destroyer of all wicked ones. Obeisance unto you, O Hayagrīva.

You are Oṁkāra, Vaṣaṭkāra, Svāhā and the fourfold Svadhā. O lord of Suras, you are the primordial one. You alone are the perpetual refuge.

You are Yajña, the lord of Yajña, the performer of Yajña, the material of Yajña, the person offering the Āhutis and that which is offered as Āhuti. The offering is made for your own sake. You are the refuge and the comrade.

You are Kāla (Time or the god of Death) of terrible form. You are the Sun and the cool-rayed Moon. You are Agni and Varuṇa. You are the destroyer of Kāla.

You are the triad of Guṇas (such as Sattva) and you alone are free from attributes. You are the abode of all qualities. You are the protector of all the living beings.

You are twin-natured as male and female in human beings, animals, birds etc. You are the four species of Jīvas (such as sweat-born etc.) of the eighty-four hundred thousand types of living beings.

You are Dinānta (end of day), Pakṣānta (end of fortnight), Māsānta (end of month), the year, the Yuga period, the Kalpānta (end of Kalpa) and the great end. O Hari, you are the ultimate end too.

19. On being eulogized thus by means of hymns like these by the Devas, O king, the Lord became pleased and he said in front of all the Devas:

The Lord said:

20. Why have all the hosts of the Devas assembled on the

earth? O Devas, what is the reason hereof? Are you harassed by Daityas?

The Devas said:

21-24. No fear from Daityas. We are eager to perform the rites of a Yajña. Desirous of seeing you, we looked up all the ten quarters. All of us are deluded by your Māyā. We are agitated with fear and perplexed in the mind. Your excellent form engaged in Yogic absorption was seen by us. O lord, the ant-queen was urged by us in the task of waking you up. Then an unprecedented thing happened. Your head became severed. The clever and efficient Viśvakarman got the head of the horse of the Sun fetched, O Viṣṇu, and joined the head. Hence, O lord, you are horse-necked.

Viṣṇu said:

25-26. I, the lord of Devas, the lord of the universe, have become horse-necked, O ye heaven-dwellers. I am pleased with you. I shall grant you all the desired boon. It is a form that is neither ugly nor terrible. It is served by all the Suras. I have become the grantor of boons and have been propitiated as the horse-necked one.

Vyāsa said:

27-28. When the Sattra (sacrifice) was concluded, the intelligent Brahmā became pleased in his mind. He assigned their due shares to the *Vamrīs* as well as to Viśvakarman. At the end of the Yajña he (Brahmā) bowed down to the most excellent Sura and went to heaven. Know this to be the reason why Hari became horse-necked.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

29-30. Viṣṇu in reality covered the entire earth in one step. At the root of everyone of his hairs there are thousands of Brahmāṇḍas (Cosmic Eggs). O lustrous one, they are seen existing separately. The Vedas do not comprehend the region beyond him. How then did his head got chopped?

Vyāsa said:

31-33. O most excellent one among the sons of Pāṇḍu, listen

to the auspicious story in the Purāṇas. None among mobile and immobile beings comprehends the conduct of the Lord.

Once the Devas including Vāsava (Indra) went to the Assembly of Brahmā. The worlds such as the earth etc., mobile and immobile beings, divine and Brāhmaṇa-Sages, all went (to heaven) to bow down to Pitāmaha (Brahmā). Viṣṇu also came there in the Assembly, as he was invited for the purpose of discussion.

34-36. Brahmā in his excessive arrogance spoke these words: "O ye gods! Who is the real (and great) cause out of the three viz. Brahmā, Īśa and Viṣṇu? Devas should speak the truth." On hearing that question Devas became surprised. Then they said, "We do not know." Then the spouse of Brahmā spoke to Viṣṇu, the lord of Devas, "Tell me who is the greatest among the three Lords."

Viṣṇu said:

37-41a. All the three worlds are deluded by the force of Viṣṇu's Māyā.

Then Brahmā said: "O lord, you do not know this. No one is deluded by the force of your Māyā. The lord of the universe, the protector of the universe cannot be arrogant or violent. All of them are enveloped by Viṣṇu's Māyā. They do not know that you are the seniormost of them."

Then Brahmā became furious. With throbbing lips he said angrily: "O Viṣṇu, listen to my words. May that head whereby these words were uttered fall down suddenly in a short while."

41b-45. Then there was a great hue and cry. The most excellent Devas with Indra and the Sages leading them made Brahmā apologize in front of Viṣṇu.

On hearing it, Viṣṇu said, "It will take place. It is certainly the truth."

Thereafter, the highly refulgent Viṣṇu, the lord of Suras, created a Tīrtha (holy spot) and performed a penance in Dharmāraṇya. On seeing himself horse-faced, O blessed one, Janārdana performed penance along with Brahmā. O descendant of Bharata, such a penance cannot be performed by anyone. He was pleased with himself by means of his own soul.

Brahmā too, endowed with the power of penance, continued it for three hundred years. He was deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā and he

continued to remain in a standing posture in front of Viṣṇu.

46-48. The lord of Devas, the lord of the universe spoke in favour of Yajñas: "O Brahmā, you are set free now (You have attained salvation). My Māyā too is not very unbearable."

Then Brahmā who acquired the boon and Janārdana who was delighted in his mind, spoke these sweet words for the good of everyone:

"Here was a great holy shrine, sacred and destructive of sins. Let this be the common shrine of Vidhi (Brahmā) and Viṣṇu undoubtedly."

49. This is the greatness of the holy spot. The horse-faced Hari became auspicious-faced with his previous face.

50-52. O king, then Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) became one endowed with the beauty of ten million Kandarpas (Lord of Love). Brahmā too, after performing the penance for three hundred divine years, was united with Sāvitrī. He reached the spot where Viṣṇu's Māyā did not harass him.

The fifth head evolved by Māyā, that of a tiger, was created in Dharmāraṇya. God Hara cut it off formerly. Viṣṇu vanished after granting the boon to him.

53-57. Brahmā installed the holy shrine of the Three-eyed Lord there. O suppressor of enemies, it is called by the name Mukteśa. It is the holy place of redemption.

That excellent one among Suras went back to his own abode served by the Suras. Those who are in the Preta stage after death are propitiated by water-libations and go to heaven.

The benefit of a holy dip therein is that of a horse sacrifice; that of sipping the sacred water is on a par with the gift of a cow. The holy places like Puṣkara etc., the rivers including Gaṅgā, the deities and the Manes come here for the purpose of bathing.

He who worships Mukteśa, he who takes bath in the beautiful lake called Devasaras and bows down to Janārdana, he who does anything with devotion, shall become rid of all sins.

58-59. After enjoying all pleasures, he goes to the region of Viṣṇu. If a woman is without a son, or has only one child, or if her child or any other dear one is dead, she and her husband shall duly take the holy dip with a single cloth on. This holy rite shall certainly destroy every defect hindering progeny.

60-63. With the grace of Mokṣeśvara, their sons, grandsons etc. shall flourish. A woman devotee should be truthful and with single-

minded attention place fruits in a bamboo vessel and gift it away. She shall be free from all defects. O king, even the Devas shall acquire the benefit of an Agniṣṭoma. Brahmā, Hari and Śiva perform great penance in Dharmāraṇya three times a day after taking their bath in Devasaras.

Then Śaṁbhu, Mokṣeśvara ('Lord of redemption'), was installed by the Devas there. One who performs *Japa* with all ancillaries, shall never again become one that sucks the breast (i.e. becomes liberated).

64-65. O great king, this holy shrine is thus famous in all the three worlds. He who faithfully performs the rite of Śrāddha to the ancestors shall uplift hundred and one members of his family and those of seven Gotras.

The Devasaras lake is exquisitely beautiful with different kinds of flowers. It appears dark with all types of blue lotuses and different kinds of aquatic beings.

66. It is resorted to by men and Devas like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others. It is served by Siddhas, Yakṣas and Sages and is auspicious in every respect.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

67. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, like what is that lake famous in that holy spot? Kindly narrate its form, features etc. correctly.

Vyāsa said:

68-69. O excellent king, O Dharmaputra, O Yudhiṣṭhira of great intellect, you have done well (in asking about it). The lake is holy and its description enables one to get rid of all sins. Its water is very clear and cool. It is as lustrous (sanctifying) as the waters of Gaṅgā. It is holy, tasty and sweet.

70. The lake is dug by Devas. It is large and deep. It is splendid with mighty waves. It is full of foams and whirlpools.

71. It is full of fishes, frogs, tortoises and crocodiles. It abounds in conch-shells, oysters etc. It is beautified by royal swans.

72. It abounds in many trees such as banyan, Plakṣa, Aśvattha and mangoes. Ruddy geese, cranes, Sārasa and Ṭiṭṭibha birds move about therein.

73. It is rendered beautiful with umbrella-like leaves full of brightness and fragrance. It is resorted to by all types of birds,

Sārasas etc. and it appears splendid.

74. O lord of the earth, it is resorted to by sages and Devas, Brāhmaṇas and other men. It is destructive of misery and all types of sins.

75. O excellent king, the history of that lake has neither beginning nor end; that lake is always resorted to by groups of Siddhas for the purposes of bath etc.

76. If a devotee performs the rite of giving away a dark-coloured cow duly on its banks, no ghost hovers about in his family as long as fourteen Indras rule.

77. Those who perform the rite of *Kanyādāna,* ('giving virgins in marriage') there duly, O great king, reside in Brahmaloka up to the dissolution of all elements.

78-79. He who gifts a buffalo, a maid servant, a cow with a calf, gold, learning, plots of land, chariots, elephants and garments with faith, enjoys never-ending heavenly bliss.

He who reads the greatness of *Devakhāta* ('dug by the Devas') lake in the vicinity of Śiva, shall undoubtedly enjoy longevity and happiness.

80-81. If a man or a woman listens with devotion to this wonderful story, O Yudhiṣṭhira, there shall be prosperity in his/her family even to the end of the Kalpa.

Thus everything connected with Hayagrīva has been narrated by me. Even the manifestation of that holy spot is for the destruction of all sins.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

*The Installation of Ānandā**

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. Certainly Śaktis of various forms have been installed by Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu for removing the fear of Rākṣasas, Daityas, Yakṣas, Pakṣins (birds) etc. from the minds of the residents of Dharmāraṇya. Describe their names and places to me correctly.

* From this chapter onwards the locations of different Śaktis in Dharmāranya are described.

Vyāsa said:

3-4. Listen, O son of Kuntī, O excellent king, virtue personified, O mighty one, Śakti was installed at the proper spot by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. She is the protectress of the race.

Śrīmātā is installed at Madārikā; Śāntā in the excellent Nandāpura. For the sake of the protection of the eminent Brāhmaṇas, they are stationed in the four quarters.

5-6. O excellent king, in their respective places, they are joined by all the Suras. For the sake of the protection of the Brāhmaṇas, all of them are stationed all over of the forest.

O great king, that (goddess) Śivā became reputed as Sāvitrī. For the purpose of slaying the Asuras, Jñānajā was installed by the Suras.

7. Gātrāyī, Goddess Pakṣiṇī (of the form of bird), Chatrajā, Dvāravāsinī, Śīhorī, Cūṭasaṁjñā (goddess named Cūṭā), Pippalāśāpurī and many others were installed for protection from fear.

8. She was installed in the West, North and South by the Devas. She holds different kinds of weapons and is bedecked in different kinds of ornaments.

9. She rides in different kinds of vehicles. She assumes different kinds of forms. She has different kinds of furies and she is destructive of different kinds of fear.

10-11. (Divine) Mother should be properly installed at the proper place in the ten directions. She is seated on Garuḍa and holds an excellent trident. She rides a lion. She is of a pure form. She gets arrogant by imbibing liquor. Splendid-faced, she shines with hands holding a sword, a Kheṭaka (shield) and an arrow.

12. She wears red Sārī. Her breasts are big and projecting forward. She has the lustre of the rising sun. Her eyes roll due to intoxication.

13. In this manner, the extremely divine goddess was installed then by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva for the sake of the protection of all living beings inhabiting Satyamandira.

14. O tiger among kings, O excellent king, (when) eulogized and worshipped, that goddess always accords all objects of enjoyment.

15. The splendid Chatrajā has been installed to the west of Dharmāraṇya. Stationed there and endowed with some (considerable) power, she protects the Brāhmaṇas.

16. For according protection from fears to Brāhmaṇas and for

slaying demons, she has assumed a terrible form and wields weapons.

17-18a. In front there (she) created an excellent lake full of water. O blessed one, if a man takes bath in this lake and offers libations and also balls of rice (to the Pitṛs), everything becomes conducive to never-ending welfare.

18b-20a. (He by whom) handfuls of divine (sacred) water are sprinkled on the ground and incense and light are offered, is not afflicted with disease and has his enemies destroyed. Oblations (of food etc.) should be offered there according to one's capacity. Enemies shall be destroyed. Wealth and foodgrains flourish.

20b-24. Ānandā, a charming part of Śakti, has been installed for the sake of the protection of Brāhmaṇas. O king, listen to her greatness.

She wears white garments. She is adorned with gold ornaments. She is divine. She has four hands and is seated on a lion. The moon adorns her crest. She has full, round, protruding breasts and is bedecked in a pearl necklace. She holds a rosary and a sword in her hands and holds a noose and a *Tomara*. Excellent divine scent has been smeared over her. She is adorned with divine garlands. Ānandā is the Śakti of Sāttvika (brilliant, good) quality. She is stationed in that city. O king, one should adore her with camphor and red sandal.

25. (The devotee) should feed (virgins) with splendid milk puddings with honey, ghee and sugar for the propitiation of Bhavānī, O king. A virgin should be worshipped.

26. There is no doubt about this that Japas, Homas, gifts and meditation there, O excellent king, are conducive to never-ending welfare.

27 At that spot, O excellent king, everything increases three-fold. If (offerings are) threefold, wealth, wives, riches etc. of the aspirant get increased certainly.

28. He incurs no loss. He does not fall ill. No enemy or evil deed (torments him). Cows get increased along with wealth and grain-stock etc.

29-30. There is no fear from Śākinī, nor from the king nor from any enemy. There is no fear of sickness. The devotee shall be successful everywhere. All the fourteen sciences come to him as though (he has) learned and acquired them. A man who resorts to Ānaṇdā shines like the sun on the earth.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Greatness of Śrīmātā

Vyāsa said:

1-5. O king, in the south was installed Goddess Śāntā of great strength. She wears garments of variegated colours and is bedecked in garlands of sylvan flowers.

O great king, she is of Tamas quality. She is the slayer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Śiva's wife was placed there, O excellent king, by Viṣṇu.

She too is beautiful, charming and dark-complexioned like a cloud. She has eight arms. The goddess seated on a tiger as her vehicle, wears black garments.

The splendid goddess wears hide of a tiger and is bedecked in divine ornaments. She holds a bell, a trident, a rosary of beads and a Kamaṇḍalu (waterpot).

The goddess has her arms well-adorned. She is bowed down to by all the Devas. She grants to her devotees wealth, grains, sons and (objects of) enjoyments.

6-10. The devotee should worship her with divine lotuses, camphor, agallochum and sandal. With the goddess in view, he should worship excellent Brāhmaṇas there itself.

With great devotion he should feed virgins with different kinds of cooked rice (food). He should worship with incense, lights and fruits beautiful in appearance, as well as liquor etc. With great concentration and mental purity one should worship with different kinds of meat of divine exquisiteness or with baked cakes of grain. He should worship with other different kinds of grains, or milk-puddings or pies. He should also worship with cooked rice, cakes of Kṛśaras (made of rice, peas, gingelly seeds etc. or with sweet pies). He should recite charming eulogies. All his enemies perish and he shall become victorious everywhere. He acquires auspicious successes in battles, games of dice and royal palaces.

11. O great king, the gentle Śāntā is installed as Kulamātṛkā. That Śrīmātā is famous. O king, listen to her greatness.

12. The great Śakti Kulamātā is there, O excellent king. That virgin daughter of Brahmā has been created by Brahmā for the sake of protection.

13. That goddess has been named Sthānamātā and Śrīmātā. She is of three forms and has been created for the protection of Brāhmaṇas.

14. She is of splendid form holding a Kamaṇḍalu, bedecked in bells and ornaments and having a rosary of beads.

15-16. She is a virgin as well as the primordial Mother. She is the protectress of the abode. She is the destroyer of Daityas, granter of wishes and is destructive of great delusions. The virgin, the daughter of Brahmā, can be approached through devotion. She wears red garments. She is smeared well with red sandal-paste.

17. The Mother with the moon as her crest-decoration is bowed to by Suras and Asuras. She is the controlling goddess of Suras. She has five faces and ten arms. She wears red garlands.

18. She is of the form of Sarasvatī herself and has been created by Brahmā for the purpose of protection. She is of Oṁkāra form of excessive merit. She has been created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

19. She is worthy of being bowed down at the feet by sages, Siddhas, Yakṣas and others, Suras, Serpents, and human beings. She grants them all they mentally cherish.

20. Just as the mother protects with great, good qualities, all the children born of her, so also the goddess protects the abode of the Brāhmaṇas for their welfare.

21. This Goddess Pālayatī is the family deity Śrīmātā. Eulogized she exterminates for ever all types of harassments and troubles.

22-25. By mere remembrance, Śrīmātā suppresses all obstacles. Śrīmātā is always adored in all auspicious activities, on the occasion of marriage, investiture with sacred thread and Sīmanta and other rites. Just as every auspicious rite is begun after worshipping God Laṁbodara (Gaṇeśa), so also, O king, all such rites should be begun after worshipping Śrīmātā.

When Brāhmaṇas are to be fed or when people invite one another for feasts of pleasure, Śrīmātā should be offered the same at the outset. O king, if the rites are performed without this initial offering, the person shall face difficulties.

26. Hence after making the food offering to her first, a holy rite should be begun. With her blessing the entire rite shall become fulfilled without obstacle.

27. (The figure of Śrīmātā) should be carved on a gold or

silver plate. O king, an excellent imprint of the foot of Śrīmātā should be offered.

28-33. The devotee takes bath and remains pure. He worships (the figure of the goddess) with flowers mixed with gingelly seeds and emblic myrobalan. Excellent silk garments are used. He should smear it with white paste of sandal, Kuṁkuma (saffron), Sindura, Karpūra (camphor), Aguru (agallochum) and musk mixed. This is called *Yakṣakardama.*

With Yakṣakardama (the mixture of the above-mentioned ingredients) and with unbroken clusters of the leaves of Bilva tree (he should worship her). White and red Karavīra flowers, Karṇikāra, Kalhāra, Caṁpaka, Ketakī and Japā (China rose) flowers are to be used for offering worship. Palāśa (trumpet flowers) and Jāti (a kind of jasmine) flowers too are used. The food offerings may consist of pies, cooked rice, lentils, *Vaṭakas* (baked pies) made of black gram flour. The deity should be propitiated with vegetable dishes as well.

The devotee should worship the mother of the universe with incense and lights etc. He should feed virgins and Brāhmaṇas, mentally regarding (the virgins) as the goddess herself. O king, they are to be fed with milk puddings and ghee mixed with sugarcandy. With great devotion he should propitiate them with sweetmeats, cooked rice etc. Even if only one Brāhmaṇa is propitiated, the devotee attains the merit of (feeding a) thousand ones.

34-38. The devotee should recite again and again the eulogistic hymn destructive of Daityas (namely *Durgā Saptaśatī*). He who eulogizes Śrīmātā with single-pointed attention gets the favour of Śrīmātā. Bathed, adored and eulogized, Dharmaputrikā becomes pleased and grants him all boons. She destroys all undesirable things. One without a son gets sons; the poor gets riches; he who wishes for a kingdom gets a kingdom; he who seeks learning attains it. One who desires prosperity gets it and one who desires a wife acquires her. There is no doubt about this that with the favour of Sarasvatī he gets everything. Ultimately the man gets the highest region inaccessible even to Suras. By the grace of Sarasvatī he gets this forever.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Story of Mātaṅgī and Karṇāṭaka

Rudra said:

1-5. Listen, O Skanda of excellent intellect, to a wonderful deed of mine. There was a very wicked Daitya in Dharmāraṇya named Karṇāṭaka. He used to interrupt couples quietly and hinder their activities. All the people were terror-stricken on seeing him. They used to flee.

Merchants, religious students and others forsook their abodes. O son, Śrīmātā assumed the form of a Mātaṅgī (tribal woman, huntress) and killed Karṇāṭaka, a Brāhmaṇa-slayer. Thereupon, all the Brāhmaṇas were delighted because of that deed. The traders too eulogized and adored Śrīmātā with great devotion. Every year they perform the worship of Śrīmātā.

6. In all auspicious rites one should at the very outset worship her. O dear son, there will never be any obstacle from then onwards.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

7. Who is this great wicked Daitya? In which family was he born? O virtuous one, describe (to me) all the various crimes perpetrated by him.

Vyāsa said:

8-9. Listen, O king, I shall narrate the heinous deeds of Karṇāṭaka. He was haughty on account of his might and valour which could not be endured by Devas and Dānavas. His activities were atrocious; his conduct was bad. He had strong arms and big curved teeth. He conquered all the worlds. He could move about in all the three worlds.

10. The great Asura used to go wherever Devas and sages were present. O king, he used to create trouble by trick or by force.

11. Vedic study had been discontinued in the world because people were afraid of him. Neither Brāhmaṇas nor Devas performed Sandhyā Prayer.

12-15. No sacrifice and no worship of gods could be performed in the different countries, villages and cities. The Asura put up

difficulties and obstacles in every holy spot. But he was unable to enter Dharmāraṇya. Due to the fear of Śakti and Śrīmātā, the Dānava was bewildered and helpless. He used to ponder, 'By what means, can I enter that spot? How can I create difficulties and obstacles for the noble-souled Brāhmaṇas, those who regularly study the Vedas and carry out the rites of sacrifice?'

16-18. On hearing the sound of Vedic recitation even from a distance, that Dānava experienced great pain, O king, like an elephant smitten with thunderbolt. He heaved forth sighs of fury and gnashed his teeth together. Biting his lips, he pressed and wrung the hands together. He used to move about like a mad man here and there, like a man afflicted with the combined derangement of the three humours.

19. In the same manner, the Dānava of ferocious nature wandered about near Dharmāraṇya; even from a distance, he burned within himself with great terror.

20-23. At the time of the marriage celebrations of Brāhmaṇas he used to assume the form of a Brāhmaṇa and (pretended) to lead an excellent life of a householder. Then the unassailable wicked fellow, the lowliest of Asuras, flew up from the earth well into the sky. The sinner that he was, he exhibited the nature of his race and out of hatred he used to enjoy (with the womenfolk).

Thus on many occasions he had abducted couples from Dharmāraṇya and committed sinful atrocities unbearable even to Devas. In that excellent city, he thus perpetrated heinous crimes. He always created all sorts of obstacles to couples on the earth.

24. All the dejected Brāhmaṇas fled to all the ten directions. All the Brāhmaṇas abandoned that charming place and went away.

25. The Brāhmaṇas went wherever there was any holy place. (Hence) O excellent king, that time, that city became bereft of all inhabitants.

26. Neither the study of the Vedas nor the performance of Yajñas (could be had there). Afflicted with the fear of Karṇāṭaka, no man dared to stay there.

27. Then, O king, all the Brāhmaṇas and the reputed merchants assembled in one place for holding relevant discussion and mutual counsel.

28. The excellent Brāhmaṇas discussed the means of killing Karṇāṭa. While they were holding counsel together, an unembodied voice was heard suddenly.

29. "Propitiate Śrīmātā, the destroyer of all miseries, the dispeller of all types of harassment and the exterminator of all Daityas."

30-35. On hearing it, all the Brāhmaṇas had their eyes full of joy. Taking excellent oblations and offerings they approached Śrīmātā. The Brāhmaṇas took with them Bali which consisted of honey, milk, curd, ghee, sugar, incense, light with five wicks, sandalpaste, flowers and various kinds of fruits. There were different kinds of grains. O king, cooked rice, pies soaked in ghee, gruel, Vaṭakas (baked or fried pie), milk pudding mixed with ghee, Sohālikās, Dīpikās, juicy Vaṭakas smeared with mustard and having nine holes and Maṇḍakas (flat thin cakes) resembling lunar disc were prepared. They bathed the goddess with Pañcāmṛta and scented water. They propitiated her with incense, lights and *Naivedyas* (food-offering).

36. Śrīmātā if propitiated by *Nīrājanas* (lights waved and displayed), flowers, lamps and sandalpaste with camphor, O king, destroys all types of troubles.

37. Assuming three forms, viz. Śrīmātā, Jaganmātā and Brāhmī, the goddess grants boons and protects the three worlds. She is of gentle features.

38-39. O virtuous one, the goddess protects Satyamandira in the form of *Trayī* (the three Vedas). Those excellent Brāhmaṇas who had assembled there, had controlled their sense-organs and won over their own souls. The divine mother was adored by all of them and propitiated with sandalpaste etc. Mentally, verbally and physically they began the eulogy of the goddess. With full concentration of mind, they stood in front of Brahmaputrī.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

40. Obeisance unto you, O Brahmaputrī. Obeisance unto you, O Brahmacāriṇī ('celibate one'). Obeisance to you, O mother of the worlds. Obeisance to you, the all-pervasive one, forever.

41. You are hunger, sleep, thirst etc. and you are anger, lethargy etc. You are peace; you are Rati (the spouse of Kāma); you are Jayā and Vijayā.

42. O goddess of Suras, you are resorted to by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others. You are Sāvitrī, Śrī and Umā; you have the status of Mātā ('mother').

43. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Sureśāna are well established through your support. O mother of the worlds, obeisance to you, O goddess

in the form of *Dhṛti* (fortitude) and *Puṣṭi* (nutrition).

44. You are in the form of Rati, *Krodha* (anger), Mahāmāyā, Chāyā and Jyotiḥ. You are the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation (of the universe). You always provide the means to (a desirable) result.

45. You are the five elements, viz. Earth, Fire, Wind, Water and Ether. Obeisance to you, O Great Vidyā, O sinless one, in the form of great knowledge.

46. You are Hrīṁkārī. You have the form of the gods. O goddess of great lustre. You are Hrīṁkārī. You are the beginning, middle and end. Save us from the great danger.

47. The highly sinful, wicked-souled Daitya harasses us. You are our family deity. You are the sole protection unto us.

48. Save, save, O great goddess. Protect, protect, O great goddess. Slay, slay the wicked Dānava, the cause of obstruction to Brāhmaṇas.

49. On being eulogized thus by the Brāhmaṇas, Goddess Mahāmāyā appeared in front of them. She had been urged to slay Karṇāṭa and accord welfare to the Brāhmaṇas. She manifested herself and said, "Ask for a boon."

Śrīmātā said:

50-52. O Brāhmaṇas, by whom have you been frightened? By whom have you been harassed? Enraged by him, I shall despatch him to the abode of Yama. Know that he by whom you have been oppressed, is short of life. To you, Brāhmaṇas, I shall give whatever you desire. It behoves you to speak out. Urged by your devotion, I shall undoubtedly carry out everything.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

53-54. The arrogant Dānava named Karṇāṭa of excessively terrifying features, causes everyday nuisance and hindrance to the inhabitants of Satyamandira. He hates Brāhmaṇas of truthful conduct, eager in the study of the Vedas. He hates them and is spiteful, O highly intelligent one. A hater of the Vedas, he is highly despicable and wicked. O highly splendoured goddess, slay him.

Vyāsa said:

55. After fully pondering over the means of killing him (the

demon) and protecting the devotees, the goddess (their family deity) laughingly said, "So it will be" (I shall kill him).

56. Then, O excellent king, Śrīmātā got extremely infuriated. In wrath she knitted her eyebrows with the eyes turning red.

57. Overcome with rage, she was emitting flames of fire from her mouth, eyes, nostrils and ears, O Bhārata.

58. Mātaṅgī who could assume any form as desired by her became manifest out of that brilliant fiery splendour. She was black in colour and hideous in face. She shone with that fiery face terrible to look at.

59. She wore red garlands and garments. Her eyes rolled and roved due to intoxication. Then Śrīmātā resorted to the vicinity of a Nyagrodha (holy fig tree).

60. The resplendent divine mother had eighteen arms. The goddess wielded a bow and arrows and held a sword and a shield.

61. She held a battle-axe, knife, trident, drinking bowl, club, serpent, iron bar, Pināka bow and noose.

62-63a. She held a rosary of beads, O king, as well as a pitcher of liquor, Śakti (spear), fierce mallet, scissors and skull. She held Badarī (? cotton shrub) full of thorns.

63b-64. There ensued a tumultuous, horripilating fight between Mātaṅgī and Demon Karṇāṭa, O excellent king.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

65. O worthy one, O virtuous one conversant with piety, how did the battle occur and how did it conclude? Who won? Mention that to me.

Vyāsa said:

66. Listen, O king of kings, I shall relate to you immediately everything that happened in the battle with the Daitya formerly, exactly as it occurred.

67-69. At the beginning of the month of Caitra, O excellent king, the Brāhmaṇas and merchants who had lost their womenfolk assembled in Dharmāraṇya and celebrated the marriage of Gaurī (Goddess or a virgin of eight years). All those Brāhmaṇas had fulfilled their vows. Realizing that their own abode, the great pilgrimage centre, was excellent and splendid, those excellent Brāhmaṇas assembled there ready to celebrate the marriage. O

highly intelligent one, in that great festival in Dharmāraṇya, ten million virgins had assembled. It is the truth. I am speaking the truth.

70-73. On the fourth lunar day, in the later half of the night, they settled the fire brought from within. A seat was offered to Brahmā (the priest presiding over the sacrifice) and they circumambulated the fire. The *Sthālīpāka* (a special rite performed by a householder) rite was performed and splendid Vedis (altars) four cubits in length were made. The Kalaśas (the sacred pitchers) and Nāgapāśa (noose of Varuṇa) were made ready. Then the Brāhmaṇas began to recite the excellent Vedic Mantras as the moving couples were seated suitably. Along with Brahmā priest, all those Brāhmaṇas in great delight chanted the Vedic Mantras in a high pitch.

74-76. With that loud sound, the entire firmament was filled. On hearing the sound of the Vedic chant uttered by the Brāhmaṇas, the terrible Dānava got up suddenly from his seat. He became devoid of sense, along with his army. All the servants rushed towards him. He spoke to (them) as well as to the others: "Let this be heard and trace wherefrom has this voice of Brāhmaṇas come up." On hearing his words the Daityas hurried immediately.

77. Agitated and bewildered in their minds, all of them ran here and there. Some of them went to Dharmāraṇya. The Brāhmaṇas were seen there.

78. The Brāhmaṇas were seen reciting the Vedas at the time of the marriage, O king. They reported everything to the wicked-souled Karṇāṭa.

79-81. On hearing it, the Brāhmaṇa-hater's eyes became copper-like red and he became furious. O illustrious king, he rushed to the place where the couples were present. Resorting to the firmament, that demon made use of the Māyā (deception) of Daityas and abducted the couples bedecked in all ornaments. Thereupon all the Brāhmaṇas congregated together and made the hue and cry of "*Bumbā*" supplicating the goddess of the universe and cried, "Save (us), save (us)."

82. On hearing it, Mātaṅgī, the mother of the universe, the goddess of the worlds, took up her excellent trident (and rushed in) roaring like a lion.

83-85. Then a battle began between the goddess and Karṇāṭa even as the sages, Brāhmaṇas and merchants stood watching. The fight was tumultuous, raising the hairs (on their ends). With her

weapons and missiles, Mātaṅgī cut and wounded the enemy intoxicated with arrogance. The Daitya too pierced the chest of the goddess with an arrow. He too was wounded with the trident and he became dejected in spirits and mentally depressed.

86. The Asura struck the goddess with his fists, but immediately he was bound by Nāgapāśa (serpentine noose) by the goddess.

87. Garuḍa missile was used by the Daitya and Nārāyaṇa missile was fitted in by her, causing the discharge of the arrow.

88-89. Thus they came into mutual clash in the fighting, aiming at victory. Then the leading Daitya took up an iron bludgeon and ferociously struck at Mātaṅgī. He professed to be a slayer of enemies. The infuriated goddess smashed the Dānava to smithereens with the fists.

90-91. At the fist blow, the Dānava fainted and fell. Then he suddenly got up and took up the Śakti in his hand. He hurled the Śataghnī ('hundred-killer') weapon at her. The splendid-faced goddess Mātaṅgī cut down the Śakti.

92-94. Adamantine in nature, that lady of excellent eyebrows, laughed loudly (and split) the Śataghnī. Thus, hitting and tormenting each other with each other's arms (the two fought on). Then struck by the trident in the heart, the demon fell down. Regaining consciousness and getting revived from the swoon the Daitya made use of demoniac Māyā. The great Asura became invisible even as everyone watched him. Then the goddess with red eyes drank the beverage and laughed.

95-98. While he had gone somewhere in the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings, the goddess says, "Where will you go? Now, O highly wicked Karṇāṭaka, come back quickly. Let us fight." Then a terrible battle ensued frightening everyone. For slaying him the mighty goddess drank liquor. The infuriated Mātaṅgī squeezed the Dānava into her mouth. The terrific demon thereafter came out through her nostrils.

99. That Daitya Karṇāṭaka became intoxicated and fought again. Thereupon Goddess Mātaṅgī too became intoxicated with liquor.

100-103. Hurting with her teeth and masticating him again and again she stuffed the Asura who was practically dead into her stomach along with bones, marrow, fat, flesh, nails and hairs. She closed her mouth with a hand and the nose with another hand.

Thereupon the extremely powerful Daitya came out through the auditory cavity. At that, his name was fixed by the great goddess. (Thus) he who came out of the ear-cavity was known to the wise men as Karṇāṭa[1]. The Daitya, arrogant due to his prowess, came to fight once again.

104-107. Wielding his weapon, the Asura roared and stood ready for battle. On seeing the unbearable Daitya, Mātaṅgī pondered over the means of killing him, O descendant of Bharata. While she pondered over it her intoxication increased. Karṇāṭa assumed a magical form of a fair-complexioned young man (resembling) Kāmadeva (the Flower-arrowed One) aged sixteen and lotus-eyed. He approached the goddess and said, "O splendid lady, woo me."

Śrīmātā said:

108-113. O king of Daityas, well said, certainly. In all the three worlds there is no one else like you. A vow has been taken by me before. Have you heard it, O excellent Asura? My younger sister Śyāmā is eager to marry. O Daitya, she has been appointed (here) for protecting the Brāhmaṇas. The only thing is that she is dark in complexion. But she is beneficial to all the worlds. 'No one will woo (a dark-complexioned) girl', thinking thus and saying so, she has been placed there (by our father). Say quickly. On hearing your reply, I shall do something good for you. O leading Daitya, my sister Śyāmalā is not yet married. She has been reserved for you, O heroic one. Marry her at the outset. O great warrior, our father will give that splendid girl to you. Go. Let Śyāmalā, the angry one, be wooed."

114. Then the infuriated Karṇāṭaka seized the powerful Śakti. The wicked one rushed forth desirous of slaying Śyāmalā.

115. Seeing the Asura come (apparently) for marriage, Śyāmalā of very generous mind, came to know the intention of that wicked-minded one.

116. Thereafter, O king, a great fight ensued between Śyāmalā and the great Asura for three months. A great confusion was created all over the earth.

117. O king, in that great battle in Dharmāraṇya, the demon named Karṇāṭa was smitten down at midday on the third lunar day, in the dark half of the month of Māgha.

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1. This explains why the demon was called Karṇāṭa.

118. Karṇāṭa fell down where he was smitten by the goddess. His excellent head resembling the peak of a mountain, fell down.

119. The entire earth along with the seas and continents quaked. Then the delighted Brāhmaṇas shouted, "Victory to Mother."

120-121. The leading Gandharvas sang. The celestial damsels danced. They had great festivities with auspicious songs and dances. Milk puddings, *Vaṭakas* and sweets were offered as *Naivedyas*. In that excellent spot Moṭeraka, they eulogized with splendid words.

122. When worshipped, Śrīmatī (? Śrīmātā) grants sons, happiness and wealth. At the advent of a great festival, the worship of Mātaṅgī is beneficial.

123. Those who worship her after installing her for the acquisition of wealth, sons etc., shall attain happiness, fame, longevity, renown and merit.

124. Ailments are removed. The Sun and other Planets become auspicious. Evil spirits, vampires, Śākinīs, Jaṁbhās etc. do not cause any trouble.

125. So also no ghosts etc. afflict. Thereupon the delighted Brāhmaṇas began to eulogize.

126. They eulogized Śrīmātā, Śakti and Mātaṅgī as well as the great Goddess Śyāmalā with great delight.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

127. O mother, thus you be our protectress in this *Sthāna* (spot) for the benefit of couples, so that the Brāhmaṇas do not become afflicted.

Mātaṅgī said:

128. O illustrious Brāhmaṇas, I am pleased with these hymns of yours. Choose as boon whatever you have desired in mind.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

129. O goddess, we shall give oblations of whatever you may think of. Stay on here for the protection of our couples.

The goddess said:

130-133. Let all the Brāhmaṇas be healthy. There shall be no affliction. When I am present presiding over everything, none of

these shall afflict you: the irrepressible Daityas, Rākṣasas, Śākinīs, evil spirits, ghosts, Jambhās etc., evil Planets, Śākinī and other malignant beings, serpents, tigers etc.

When the marriage celebration is about to take place, there should be great festivities. For the benefit of the couples, the devotee should always worship me. Undoubtedly I shall remove all his troubles.

134. He shall not have mental anguish, physical ailments and pain or bewilderment. He obtains great happiness, so also fame, merit and perpetual wealth. He will not meet with premature death. He will have no gastric trouble or biliousness.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

135. What is the procedure for worship? Of what sort shall the *Naivedya* be? What shall be the nature of the incense, O mother? How should one proceed with your worship?

Śrīdevī said:[1]

136. Let my words be heard, O Brāhmaṇas. On a gold plate, the devotee shall engrave the goddess. If she is worshipped, the couples shall enjoy long life.

137. Or the figure can be engraved on a silver plate or a brass plate. The goddess has eighteen arms. She is smeared with sandalpaste.

138-140. The goddess of the worlds (Bhuvaneśvarī) has these eighteen weapons (in hands): a winnowing-basket with arrows, a dog, an excellent lotus, *Kartarī* (scissors), a quiver and bow, a shield, a noose, a mallet, a cymbal, an iron javelin, a conch-shell, a discus, an excellent mace, a splendid iron bar, a Khaṭvāṅga, Badarī and a charming goad.

141-143. The devotee shall draw (engrave) the figure of the goddess with ear-rings and bedecked in armlets and anklets. Bracelets and pearls and lotuses adorn her. There is also the garland of heads (skulls). The letters of the alphabet should surrounded her. She wears a ring too. After drawing the figure of Bhuvaneśvarī brilliant with different ornaments, well-known as Mātaṅgī for the purpose of installation, O Brāhmaṇas, the devotee should worship her with delighting (fragrant) sandalpaste and flowers.

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1. Procedure of Śrīdevī (Śrīmātā) worship (vv 136-155).

144. The intelligent devotee should worship Mātaṅgī with Yakṣakardama (mixture of saffron, musk etc.). A lamp filled with ghee and containing seven wicks should be lighted.

145. Fumigation should be conducted with fragrant *Guggalu* (aromatic resin) smeared with ghee. The couple should offer *Argha* with excellent coconut.

146-147. They should perform four circumambulations. The couple should cover themselves with a silken cloth and go ahead. After sprinkling water over Mātaṅgī the excellent Mādhvīka (honey that intoxicates) should be taken. The intelligent devotee should worship Mātaṅgī with vocal and instrumental music.

148. He shall also worship Suvāsinīs (married woman with husband alive and enjoying *Saubhāgya*) thinking that they are born of Mātaṅgī. For the quelling of all troubles, the couples shall perform dance too.

149-153. The *Naivedya* (food-offering) should be splendid and of eighteen types consisting of different kinds of cooked rice. They shall be Vaṭaka, excellent Apūpikās, milk with sugar, excellent *Ballākara, Yūpā, Kṣiptakulmāṣaka* (gruel), *Sohālikā, Bhinnavaṭā, Lāpsikā, Padmacūrṇaka, Śaiveyā* without impurity, *Parpaṭas, Śālakās* etc. The *Pūraṇa* shall be made with Māsa (? blackgram) (or Māṁsa—meat) in an excellent and charming manner. The couple should prepare Rājamāṣa in profuse quantities. They shall make *Pheṇikās* and *Ropikās* of charming nature. These eighteen foodstuffs should be with ghee and sugar as well as vegetable dishes.

154. They should keep awake at night and should worship a Suvāsinī. The couple should see the reflection of their faces in ghee.

155. This should be done mutually for the sake of quelling *Utpātas* (phenomena foreboding calamities). Thus the splendid adoration of Mātaṅgī has been described by me.

156-157. She creates obstacles for a foolish one who does not worship. He will have to witness death of the couple, destruction of wealth, great fear, pain, sickness and incidents of arson. For this reason, O Brāhmaṇas, an intelligent devotee should worship Mātaṅgī.

158. In the administration of all the Brāhmaṇas and merchants, the great goddess makes everything free from obstacles for the couples.

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159-163. When they assented saying "So be it", she spoke once again: "Let this be heard, O Brāhmaṇas. The festivals of marriage etc. should be performed in accordance with my instruction. When the time for the celebration of the marriage arrives, the following should be followed for the happiness of the couples, and absence of obstacles, along with the servants. Collyrium should be applied to the eyes of all the relatives. A *Tilaka*-mark should be made in the middle of the eyebrows. It shall be crescent-shaped. O Brāhmaṇas, a charming dot also shall be put. If it is done thus, O Brāhmaṇas, there shall be peace, not otherwise. This *Tilaka* of crescent shape is conducive to the increase of sons; it removes all obstacles and is destructive of all uneasiness and ailments."

Vyāsa said:

164-167. Thereupon, with the grace of Goddess Mātaṅgī at Satyamandira in Dharmāraṇya, all the subjects became calm and peaceful, O king. The Brāhmaṇas worshipped the daughter of Brahmā with delighted heart. It was decided that the worship of Mātaṅgī should be continued every year by means of foodstuffs and feeding on the third lunar day in the dark half of Māgha.

The demon Karṇāṭa was reborn on the earth in the form of Yakṣman (consumptive disease). Because of fear he left that spot and went southwards. While going, the Daitya in the form of Yakṣman spoke:

168-174. "Let this be heard, all ye Brāhmaṇas, the inhabitants of Dharmāraṇya and all merchants. Let my instruction be carried out. In the month of Māgha, for my propitiation and for absence of hindrance on the earth forever, men should perform this rite with three-leaved grain and Mūlaka (radish in particular) or with gingelly oil with due observance of vows. For the perpetual propitiation of Yakṣmā, he takes only one meal (a day).

This excellent *Vrata* (rite) of Yakṣman should be practised every year by everyone, a child, a youth or an old man.

All the menfolk in every household should be called (to observe the vow). They shall always adhere to the vow of a single meal. For the sake of the son, the mother performs the excellent Vrata. The father or brother on whose behalf the Vrata is observed need not have any fear anywhere—no sickness, no bondage. A woman can perform the rite on behalf of the husband. If she is unable the

other one (i.e. the husband) should perform it."

175. Instructing thus on the eve of his leaving Satyamandira, he proceeded towards the South on the excellent shore of the ocean.

176. Karṇāṭa took up a huge body and established an excellent state with his own name.[1]

177-179. In that state all the objects, wealth and grain were available in plenty. He hovered round that Karṇāṭa state for a long time.

O excellent one among men, if people listen to the meritorious story of Dharmāraṇya repeatedly and the greatness of Śrīmātā, nothing untoward or adverse happens in their family. One who has no son obtains sons; one deficient in riches gets wealth, longevity, health and prosperity with the grace of Śrīmātā.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Greatness of Indreśvara and Jayanteśvara

Vyāsa said:

1. After taking the holy bath in Indrasaras and having visited Indreśvara, Śiva, one is rid of the sin incurred in the course of seven births. There is no doubt about it.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

2. By whom was that holy shrine, the most excellent of all excellent things, created at the outset? Please describe this correctly, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, O honoured one.

Vyāsa said:

3. O great king, a very difficult penance was performed by Indra himself for a hundred years in the northern part of the village.

4. O descendant of Bharata, it was an extremely terrible penance (performed) with Śiva in view. With the hands lifted up

1. A fictitious derivation of the name of Karnataka State.

and standing on a single toe, the highly resplendent (Indra) faced the Sun.

5. He was engaged in propitiating Śiva with concentration and great self-control in order to dispel the sin that had been incurred on account of the slaughter of Vṛtra.

6-8. Śaṁbhu, the moon-crested lord, propitiated with the penance, came there. His whole body was smeared with sacred ash. His hair was matted. He had the emblem of the bull. The three-eyed, ten-armed, five-faced lord had Khaṭvāṅga (staff with a skull at the top) in his hand. He was seated on the bull. He held Gaṅgā in his matted hair. He was surrounded by ghosts and spirits. The most excellent one among the gods was highly pleased. The compassionate lord was ready to grant the boon with a delighted mind. He said to Devendra thus:

Hara said:

9. O lord, I shall grant you what you request for.

Indra said:

10-11. O lord, the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter torments me continuously. O most excellent one among Suras, it is the sin incurred by killing the demon Vṛtra. O Maheśvara, the ocean of sympathy, O lord of Devas, if you are pleased remove this sin that gives a great pain to me.

Hara said:

12-13. Brāhmaṇa-slaughter does not afflict anyone in Dharmāraṇya, O lord of Suras. At my behest, O Devendra, and at the behest of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, the sin incurred due to the slaughter of cows, Brāhmaṇas, boys, as well as women does not afflict anyone (there). O Jiṣṇu (the victorious), at the behest of Yama no slaughter (i.e., sin due to it) stays here. Hence, O great king, come in and perform the ritualistic bath (at Dharmāraṇya).

Indra said:

14-15. If you are pleased with me, O great lord, the ocean of sympathy, O Śaṁkara, be installed here with my name.

Saying "So be it" the great lord, Hara who was highly pleased,

showed there itself his Liṅga that was destructive of sins.

16. Those who know the events of the three times (past, present and future) know that Śrīkaṇṭha is staying there. With his own Yogic power it (the Liṅga) was evolved by Śaṁbhu from the back of a tortoise (shell).

17. In the presence of the king of Devas who was afraid of the sin of Vṛtra's slaughter, the deity with the name of Indreśvara stayed there in Dharmāraṇya, O king.

18-22. The lord is present there with a desire for the welfare of all the worlds and for the purification of all sins.

If a man worships with devotion the deity Indreśvara with flowers, incense etc., O great king, he gets rid of all sins.

On the eighth and fourteenth day of the lunar month, particularly in the month of Māgha, he should worship the lord for the purification of all sins. He (the worshipper) is honoured in the region of Śiva.

A person who performs the rite of letting off a dark-coloured bull in the name of Śiva in front of Indreśvara, shall uplift hundred and one members of his family and seven Gotras. He who performs the *Rudrajapa* rite with all its ancillaries on the fourteenth day, shall become purified of all sins and attain the highest region.

23-24. If a devotee makes an eye of gold with a gem in the middle and gifts it to Brāhmaṇas at the excellent Indratīrtha, he will never be blind for sixty births. Their eyes will always be free from impurity. By taking holy bath in front of the deity, all great diseases are removed (cured).

25-28. If the deity is worshipped with single-mindedness, the devotee is rid of all ailments.

If a man takes the holy dip in the Kuṇḍa and offers libation to the Manes, O king, the *Pitṛs* and *Pitāmahas* (fathers, grandfathers i.e. Manes) become pleased with him always.

Those persons (embodied ones) who are afflicted with great diseases such as leprosy etc., become clean and pure, merely by the holy bath therein. They become endowed with divine bodies.

Men overwhelmed with fever and other difficulties should take the holy dip for their own benefit. By the mere bath, they become pure and endowed with divine bodies.

After taking the bath the person should worship the lord. He is rid of all suffering of fever.

29-30. There is no doubt that (periodic) fever that afflicts daily,

after every two days, after every three days and four days or typhoid of fourteen days or a month's duration is cured (destroyed) with the grace of Indreśvara. O king, it is true, (really) true, that he certainly becomes free from fever.

31. A barren woman, an ill-fated woman, a woman with one child, a woman whose progeny is dead in the womb, an evil-minded one whose dear child is dead, should take bath in the Kuṇḍa in front of Śiva and worship with single-minded devotion. She becomes pure merely by the ablution.

32. After granting many boons like these the Lord with the Pināka bow went to his own city attended by Suras and Asuras, O son of Kuntī.

33. Then Indra of great brilliance went to his city. There itself, an excellent Liṅga was installed by Jayanta (Indra's son) too.

34-38. Being eulogized in that Liṅga always, Hara was pleased with Jayanta. O mighty-armed one, the lord of Suras leaves his own region and comes here for worshipping three times a day in the company of his son.

Thus I have narrated everything that bestows all types of happiness. The worship of Jayanteśa yields the same benefit as the worship of Indreśvara, O great king. It is true, true, undoubtedly.

After taking bath in the Kuṇḍa, O great king, and worshipping with concentrated mind, a devotee becomes purified of all sins. He is honoured in the region of Indra. Thanks to the grace of Jayanteśa, a man who devoutly listens to this becomes rid of all sins and he gets everything he desires.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Description of Dharā Kṣetra

Vyāsa said:

1. Henceforth I shall describe a holy shrine of Śiva than which there is nothing more excellent. It is at this place that Lord Śaṅkara took another birth.

2. Śaṅkara, the three-eyed lord of the chiefs of Devas, was

pinned down by the Daughter of the Mountain (i.e. Pārvatī), O blessed one, and thrown down on the earth.

3. Outwitted and stupefied, he could not distinguish between night and day. The Three-eyed Lord became insentient, neither a man, nor a woman nor a neuter (eunuch).

4. At that time, when he was pinned down, it became as if it was the end of the Kalpa. It was all of a sudden that the transfixation was done by Pārvatī.

Yudhiṣṭhira asked:

5-6. The words uttered by you (just now) are extraordinarily surprising. How is it that he who is the chief among all Devas and Yogins, was pinned down by Pārvatī? How can Śiva be devoid of activity? Let the reason thereof be narrated. It produces great curiosity in me.

Vyāsa replied:

7-8. O king! A mass of Mantras (Magic spells) was revealed by Śaṅkara to Pārvatī. They belonged to the subsidiary branches (*Upavedas*) of Atharva Veda. The six varieties (classes) of these Mantras are well-known as follows: Śākinī, Ḍākinī, Kākinī, Hākinī, Ekinī and Lākinī.

9-10. (*Defective Text*) After picking out the *Bījas* (certain syllables called *'Seeds'* of the Mantras) from them, a garland was wreathed. It was divulged by Śaṁbhu to Pārvatī, O excellent king.

If the *Mantroddhāra* ('drawing out (?) of the Mantra') is made with them (those 'seeds'), it shall be eightfold. O sinless one, that Śākinī is a highly wicked woman. She must be won over.

Pārvatī said:

11. Six varieties (of the powers of Mantras) have been revealed by you, O Lord. These Śaktis (powers) of six varieties with Yogic garlands are unapproachable (beyond comprehension), O Lord. What is mentioned as sixfold is mysterious and secret. Narrate it to me clearly.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

12. O great goddess! It cannot be probed by (and divulged to)

Devas, Asuras and human beings.

Pārvatī said:

13-15. Obeisance to you, the omniformed (Lord). Bow to you, O bull-emblemed one. Hail to you, the Lord of sages with matted hair! Salute to you, O blue-throated one. Obeisance to you, O ocean of mercy. Bow to you of the form of Kāla (Time or Death).

With these many tender words, the Daughter of the Mountain (Pārvatī) propitiated that ocean of mercy. She prostrated before him like a staff. She caught hold of his pair of feet.

The merciful Lord spoke to her:

16. "Why do you eulogize, O fair lady? Ask for what is desired in the mind by you."

Pārvatī said:

17. If I am your (real) beloved, narrate to me in detail, leaving no scope for doubt, the procedure of the withdrawal (of the *Mantra*) along with the *Dhyāna* (mental representation of the deity of the Mantra).

Śrī Rudra said:

18. O goddess! The result of the combination (of the *mantra-bījas*) should not be divulged by you. I shall tell the whole truth including the *Mantra-Kūṭa* and the like (the esoteric aspect of the occult spell).

19. Of all the *Kūṭas*, O excellent-faced one, *Māyā* is the seed. The middle letter (syllable) of all is brightened by *Bindu* (dot) and *Nāda* (sound) etc.

20-23*. The *Bīja* of *Vahni* (Fire) is accompanied by (the seed of) *Vāta* (Wind) and the *Bīja* of *Kūrma* (tortoise). The *Bīja* with the Sun as source, is born of the Śakti *Bīja*. This *Kūṭa* is the first *Bīja* and the second one is considered to be that of *Vibhu* (the lord). The third one, the *Bīja* of Fire is conjoined with *Bindu* (dot) (*Anusvāra*) and *Indu* (moon). The fourth is joined with Śeṣa (the Serpent king or the remaining part). So also the Brahmabīja and the sage. The fifth one is *Kālabīja* (the seed of time). The sixth

* These are esoteric terms of Tantraśāstra.

is *Pārthivabījaka* (the seed of the earth). In the seventh and the eighth, the exterior is accompanied by Nṛsiṁha. In the ninth and the tenth is the second and first *Aṣṭakūṭaka* (eight knotty esoteric points).

24. O lady of excellent conduct! In Rudrākṣa their Bīja is the reverse. In the fourteenth one the purpose of the *Caturthī* (dative case) is joined to the *Bīja* of *Pṛthvī* (earth).

25-27. (*Defective Text*) Some of the remaining mystic syllables have been preserved, O daughter of Menakā (Menā).

O king, when that wife of Śiva fell down on the earth, she was consoled by Rāma (?). The destroyer of the three Puras (Śiva) said laughingly, "O fair lady, since you have borne difficulties, you will have the power of killing, deluding, controlling, attracting and agitating. Whatever is desired will be achieved."

28. On hearing this, the goddess with a mischievous heart, smiled brightly. The remaining intricate, knotty things, the Vīra ones, were told to her by Śaṁbhu.

29. The Ocean of Sympathy said, "Win them over in accordance with the procedure." From Kailāsa Hara went quickly to Dharmāraṇya.

30-36. On coming to know, the goddess went to the place where the Bull-bannered One was. Presently he fell on the earth in Dharmāraṇya, O excellent king, (so also fell) the matted hair, the moon, the serpents, the bull, the trident and other weapons, the garland of skulls, the loin cloth and the skull of Brahmā. The attendants, the spirits and the ghosts went everywhere in all the ten directions. Lord Maheśvara realized that he had lost consciousness. The Gaṇas (attendants), Kūṭas and others were born of sweat. Having produced five Kūṭas from it, you gave it to Śūlin (Trident-bearing Lord)(?).

O great king, those Sādhakas (aspirants) were engaged in Japa and Homa. Having ghosts for seats all of them were stationed above Kālakūṭa (?). They discussed mutually as to how the Pināka-bearing One could be released. Thereupon, Gaurī was overwhelmed with troubles and very much agitated due to the fear of fire. Śiva was honoured by them. Gaurī became ashamed and stood with face downwards. Staying there, she performed a penance carrying out the order of Śaṅkara.

37. With face turned down, she inhaled smoke in performing

the penance called *Pañcāgni* ('five fires', with four in the four positions around and the sun above). The Bull-emblemed Lord was eulogized by the Kūṭa syllables and he was pleased with them.

38. O king, this is the Dharākṣetra (shrine of the Earth). It destroys sins and yields all desired objectives. In this spot there shines the splendid (lake) Devamajjanaka ('Divine Ablution').

39. A person gets rid of all sins, O king, on drinking the water and taking bath there on the fourteenth day in the dark half of the month of Āśvina (Sept.-October).

40-42. If the devotee undertakes fast in accordance with the injunctions and worships the Lord of Devas, none of these malignant spirits affects adversely: Śākinī, Ḍākinī, Vetālas (vampires), Pitṛs, Planets, Meteors etc. O excellent-faced lady, this is verily the truth, the truth.

By performing the rite of *Rudrajapa* with all ancillaries there, the devotee gets rid of all sins.

O king, it is the truth, the truth that the three types of ailments perish. All these things have been narrated by me. Listen to Devamajjanaka.

43-44. A man who narrates and a man who listens, obtain that benefit which accrues by performing thousands of horse-sacrifices with plenty of monetary gifts.

One without a son begets sons; the poor obtains wealth. There is no doubt about this that he obtains long life, health and prosperity.

45-47. By remembering and glorifying (the deity), O king, all the three types of sins arising from mental, verbal and physical activities, perish.

He who listens to its greatness, O dear one, shall become endowed with all happiness. It is conducive to wealth, fame and longevity. It grants happiness and progeny.

By listening to it, O king, all that merit is acquired that comes from visiting all holy spots, making all types of gifts and performing all sorts of sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

*Gotras, Pravaras etc. of the Residents of Dharmāraṇya**

Vyāsa said:

1-4. O king, the Kuladevatās (family deities) were produced by her (Pārvatī) from her body. They are: (1) Bhaṭṭārikī, (2) Chatrā, (3) Ovikā, (4) Jñānajā, (5) Bhadrakālī, (6) Māheśī, (7) Siṁhorī, (8) Dhanamardanī, (9) Gātrā, (10) Śāntā, (11) Śeṣadevī, (12) Vārāhī, (13) Bhadrayoginī, (14) Yogeśvarī, (15) Mohalajjā, (16) Kuleśī, (17) Śakulācitā, (18) Tāraṇī, (19) Kanakānandā, (20) Cāmuṇḍā, (21) Sureśvarī, (22) Dārabhaṭṭārikā and others. From each of these hundred-fold auspicious Śaktis of variety of forms were born therein.

Henceforth I shall describe the Pravaras (noble ancestors of saintly conduct) and the Devatās.

5-10. The Pravaras having the same Gotra as Aupamanyava. That belongs to Gotra (Gātrā) Devī. (Those of) Gātrā (ninth Devatā) are Vasiṣṭha and Bharadvāja.

The Pravaras of Jñānajā (4th Devatā mentioned above) of the same Gotra as Indrapramadakaśyapa are Kāśyapa, Avatsāra and Raibhya.

The Pravaras of Dārabhadārikā (22nd above-mentioned as Dārabhaṭṭārikā) born of the same Gotra as Māṇḍavya are five in number: Bhārgava, Cyavana, Atri, Avī and Jamadagni.

Tāraṇī (the 18th Devatā) is of the same Gotra as Kuśika.

The Pravaras of Mahābalā (6th Devatā mentioned as Māheśī) are Viśvāmitra, Devarāja and Uddālaka.

Gotradevī is of the same Gotra as Śaunaka. The Pravaras of Śāntā are Bhārgava, Āṇainahotra and Gārtsamada.

Bhadrayoginī (13th Devatā above) is of the same Gotra as Kṛṣṇātreya. The Pravaras of this goddess are Ātreya, Arcanānasa and Śyāvāśva.

Śāntā (10th Devatā above) is born of the same Gotra as Gārgyāyaṇa. The Pravaras are (five): Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āptavān, Avī and Jamadagni.

11-16. The Pravaras of Jñānajā (4th Devatā above) (different

*In the text that follows there are many scribal errors. The printed text contains a note by the first editor pointing this out. Attempt has been made to give as correct a list as possible.

—Translator

from the previous one mentioned in v 5) born of the same Gotra as Gārgyāyaṇa are (five): Kāśyapa, Avatsāra, Śāṇḍila, Asita and Devala.

Śāntā (10th Devatā) is born of the same Gotra as Gāṅgeya. The Pravaras of Dvāravāsinī (not mentioned in the above list) are (three): Gārgya-Gārgi, Śaṅkha and Likhita.

The Pravaras of Śeṣadevī (mentioned as 'Śeṣalaudha' in the text) born of the same Gotra as Paingya are (three): Āṅgirasa, Ambarīṣa and Yauvanāśva.

The Pravaras of Jñānajā (repetition of the name alone) born of the same Gotra as Vatsa are (five): Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnuvān, Aurva and Purodha.* The Pravaras of Śīhari (mentioned before the 7th one as Simhorī) are (five): Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnuvān, Aurva and Purodhas.

17-21. The Pravaras of Śīharī (repetition of the name alone) born of the same Gotra as Śyāmāyana are (five): Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnuvān, Avī and Jamadagni.

The Pravaras of Chatrajā (2nd above, mentioned as Chatrā) born of the same Gotra as Dhāraṇa are (three): Agastya, Dārvācyuta** and Dadhyavāhana.

The Pravaras of Cāmuṇḍā (20th Devatā above) born of the same Gotra as Kāśyapa are (three): Kāśyapa, Avatsāra and Naidhruva.

The Pravaras of Pakṣiṇī (she is not mentioned above) born of the same Gotra as Bharadvāja are (three): Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja.

The Pravaras of Bhadrayoginī (mentioned before differently) born of the same Gotra as Māṇḍavya, Vatsa, Vātsya, Vātsyāyana and Sāmānyalaugākṣa are (three): Kāśyapa, Vasiṣṭha and Avatsāra.

Pakṣīṇī is born of the same Gotra as Kauśīka.

The Pravaras of Kauśika are (three): Viśvāmitra, Atharva and Bhāradvāja.***

1-5. Similarity in Pravaras Paiṅgya and Bharadvāja.

(Common Pravaras:) Laugākṣa, Gārgyāyana, Kāśyapa and Kaśyapa, Kauśika and Kuśika; Aupamanyu and Laugākṣa. If Viśvāmitra

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* The 15th verse is a repetition of the 14th.

** Pravaras are normally 3 or 5 and not 4. Hence Dārvācyuta is taken as one and not Dāru and Acyuta.

*** From this line onwards a new numbering from one is begun in the printed text. I have followed the numbering in the text instead of correcting it as 22, 23 etc.

belongs to the lineage in these Pravaras, all of them should be considered to be of the same Gotra and no marriage can take place between the two members.

6. One should desist from marrying a girl of the same Pravaras, same Gotra, one who is *Sapiṇḍa* (kinsman partaking of the funeral rice-ball offerings) of his mother; one who is suffering from incurable disease, one who has no hairs growing, one who is married by another, the daughter of one who has no son and one who is excessively dark-complexioned.[1]

7. If in the Pravaras only one sage is common, even then there is *Samānagotratva* (birth in the same Gotra) except in the group of Bhṛgu and Aṅgiras.

8. There is no marriage if there is similarity of Pravaras in five or three sages.[2] (If there is similarity of three sages i.e. if three Pravaras are common, where five sages constitute the Pravaras, no marriage can take place.) If there is similarity of two sages where three sages constitute the Pravaras then also there is a ban. So is the case of Bhṛgu and Aṅgiras. In the remaining cases, even if one sage is common the ban is to be enforced.

Kātyāyana says:

9. After marrying a virgin of the same Gotra and Pravara and carnally approaching her, one procreates a Cāṇḍāla and is excluded from Brāhmaṇahood.

Yājñavalkya says:

10-11. If a Brāhmaṇa marries a girl of the same Gotra and Pravara, he should abandon her and perform the expiatory rite of Cāndrāyaṇa. After abandoning the wife, one should protect her like one's mother.

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1. Cf. Disqualification of a marriageable girl (quoted in HD II,i,433):
   dīrgha-kutsitarogārtā vyaṅgā saṁsṛṣṭamaithunā /
   duṣṭānyagatabhāvā ca kanyā-doṣāḥ prakīrtitāḥ //
2. As P.V. Kane Shows (HD II,i,436-437), some authors on Dharmaśāstra prohibit marriage between persons of the same Gotra but are silent about common Pravaras and vice versa. But the general current prohibition is about marrying a *sugotra, sapravara* or *sapiṇḍa* girl.

12-13. One shall marry a girl who is not suffering from any disease, who has a brother, and who is not born in the same Gotra with the same sage. She should be beyond the fifth remove from his mother and beyond the seventh remove from his father. Gautama says that marriage is contracted between two persons of dissimilar Pravaras. If only one Pravara is different from the mother's family, the marriage should not be celebrated. That girl shall be a sister.

14. If the elder brother remains (unmarried) and the younger brother marries and begins to perform Agnihotra rites, the younger brother should be known as *Parivettṛ* and the elder brother is *Parivitti.*[1]

15-17. It is mentioned by Kāśyapa that these burn the family like fire: The daughter of a widow who marries again should be always avoided. She is the lowliest born. One who has been verbally given in marriage, one mentally betrothed, one whose marital sacred string tying is over, one who is offered by touching water or taken by the hand, one who has gone round the fire and one who is a child of a widow remarried—all these burn the family like fires (says Kāśyapa).

18. Henceforth, *Avaṭaṅkas* are mentioned.[2] They are Gotra, Pātra, Dātra, Trāśayatra, Laḍakātra, Maṇḍakīyātra, Viḍalātra, Rahilā, Bhādila, Vālūā, Pokīyā, Vākīyā, Makāḷyā, Lāḍā, Māṇavedā, Kālīyā, Tālī, Velīyā, Pāṁvalaṇḍiyā, Mūḍā, Pītūlā, Dhigamagha, Bhūtapādavādī, Hōphoyā, Śevārdata, Vapāra, Vathāra, Sādhakā and Bahudhiyā.

19. After marrying the daughter of the maternal uncle as well as a daughter of the same Gotra as that of his mother, and a girl of the same Pravara (the man) should forsake her and perform Cāndrāyaṇa rite.

1. Manu III.172, Baudhāyana Dh.S. II.1.30 have strongly condemned such a marriage.

2. The original editor of this text remarks that the names of these *Avaṭaṅkas* are printed as they were found in his MSS. He requests scholars to rectify wherever necessary.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Installation of the Deities

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Yoginīs, residents of the (holy) spots, have been created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Tell me of what sort are they? Which deity has been installed in which spot?

Vyāsa said:

2. It has been well asked by you, O sinless one. You who are of a noble family, know everything, O Yudhiṣṭhira. I shall tell everything completely.

3-4. (These deities) richly beautified with different kinds of ornaments, resplendent with different kinds of gems, wearing different kinds of garments, equipped with different kinds of weapons, riding different kinds of vehicles and producing different kinds of notes, have been created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśa for the removal of the fear of Brāhmaṇas.

5. They have been established in the East, South, North and West, as well as in the South-East, South-West, North-West and North-East.

6-8. They are Āśāpurī, Gātrāī, Chatrāī, Jñānajā, Pippalāmbā, Śāntā, Siddhā, Bhaṭṭārikā, Kadaṁbā, Vikaṭā, Mīṭhā, Suparṇā, Vasujā, Mātaṅgī, Mahādevī, Vārāhī, Mukuṭeśvarī, Bhadrā, Mahāśakti, Śiṁhārā and Mahābalā. These and many others too (are installed). It is difficult to mention all.

9-12. The goddesses are of different forms. They take different guises. In the northern side of the holy spot near Āśāpūrṇā goddess, Ānandā who gives delight is present in the East. Staying in the North with joy are the deities of different forms. Propitiated by the offer of water, these deities grant everything wished for.

In the spot, in the South-West, Śāntā, the bestower of peace, is seated on a lion. She has four hands and she grants boons. Bhaṭṭārī of great power stands there itself.

13-15. Eulogized and adored with devotion, she destroys the fright of the devotees.

The deity Kṣemalābhā is stationed about twenty-one kilometres from the holy spot. She is to be worshipped by smearing her with

unguents. (As soon as she is thought of she bestows all supernatural powers.)

In the Eastern quarter is the deity that bestows worldly enjoyment and salvation when propitiated with the offerings of oblations. She is accompanied by her attendants. Her form and conduct is beyond the power of thought. She destroys all enemies. In the three junctions of time, she is directly perceptible.

16. About twentyone kilometres in the southern direction from the holy spot is stationed Vindhyavāsinī. She is equipped with weapons. She removes the fright of the devotees. She is endowed with beauty of form.

17. In the west is Goddess Nimbajā occupying the ground to that much extent. Of great power, she gives pleasure to the eyes when seen.

18. In the north of the holy spot occupying the ground extending to that much is the Śakti Bahusuvarṇākṣā. On being worshipped she bestows gold.

19. In the north-west corner of the holy spot about three kilometres away is stationed the great goddess Kṣetradharā holding a goat at times.

20. In the north side of the city, about three kilometres away, is the deity Karṇikā engaged in helping all and destroying the troubles of the (people in) the holy spot.

21. In the south-western side of the holy spot are the goddesses named Jalamātaraḥ ('Mothers of Water'), the chief among whom is Brahmāṇī. They have assumed different kinds of form.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Lohāsura Devastates Dharmāraṇya

Vyāsa said:

1-3. Henceforth, I shall narrate what was done by Brahmā formerly, I shall mention everything. Listen with an attentive mind.

Once there was a fight between Devas and Dānavas out of enmity. In that foul war Devas were subjected to terrible mental pain and anguish. Being agitated they sought refuge in Brahmā.

The (Leader of) Devas said:

4. O Brahmā, in what way can I bring about the slaughter of Daityas. Let the means be shown quickly to me. I shall carry it out.

Brahmā said:

5. Formerly on being pleased with the penance of Yama, Dharmāraṇya was created by me, Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara.

6. There is no doubt about this that whatever religious gift is made there, whatever Yajña or excellent penance is performed (there) becomes ten million times fruitful.

7. Be it sin or merit, it becomes increased ten million fold. Hence, O Suras, it has never been attacked by Daityas.

8. On hearing the words of Brahmā, all the Devas became surprised. Under the leadership of Brahmā, they came to Dharmāraṇya

9-10. They began a great *Sattra* (sacrifice) lasting a thousand years. Aṅgiras and Mārkaṇdeya were invited to be the *Ācāryas* (preceptors). The highly intelligent Atri and Kaśyapa were made *Hotṛs* (i.e. those who offer the sacrificial offerings into the fire). Jamadagni and Gautama were requested to be *Adhvaryus* (i.e. those who do all work preparatory to sacrifice).

11. Bharadvāja and Vasiṣṭha were directed to be *Pratyadhvaryus* (i.e. assistants to the *Adhvaryus*). Nārada and Vālmīki were made promptors.

12-13. They respectfully installed Brahmā in the seat of Brahmā (Presider over sacrifice). The Suras made an altar having sides twelve kilometres in length. For the chanting of the Vedic Mantras from Ṛk, Yajus, Sāman and Atharva Vedas all the Brāhmaṇas were invited.

14-15. Gaṇanātha and Kārttikeya, the sons of Śaṁbhu, Indra the wielder of thunderbolt and Jayanta, the son of Indra—these all heroic Devas were made the four doorkeepers. Then god Fire was invoked by means of *Rakṣoghna Mantra* ('spell for exterminating the demons').

16. Then, O lord of men, the Devas made the offerings of gingelly seeds mixed with barley and soaked in honey and ghee along with a recitation of Vedic Mantras.

17-21. *Āghāras* (sprinkling of clarified butter) and portions of

Ājya (sacrificial offerings of ghee, milk and other things) were offered. Then grapes, sugarcane, arecanut, orange, lemon and citron were offered. Later, coconut and pomegranates were offered in due course. Honey, clarified butter and milk mixed with sugar and *Kṛśara* (milk, rice, gingelly seeds boiled and a dish prepared) were offered along with rice and lotuses At the time of the performance of Yajña, (the Devas) controlled their speech. The blessed ones, carefully thought over (everything) and performed the Yajña with due offerings of monetary gifts. After offering the excellent and auspicious *Soma* libation, they were extremely delighted.

To the poor, blind and the wretched, cooked rice was given liberally. Particularly cooked rice was given to the Brāhmaṇas as much as they desired. Milk pudding with sugar and ghee as well as vegetable dishes were provided (along with it).

22-24. (The following varieties of dishes and sweets were served:) Mandakas (flat sweet cakes), baked pies, sweet pies, splendid Veṣṭikās (a preparation of pumpkin gourd etc.), a thousand sweets like Pheṇikās, Ghurghuras etc., splendid cooked rice, lentils, pulses like Āḍhakī, green gram, Parpaṭas, Vaṭikās etc., varieties of lambatives consisting of Tryūṣaṇas (pepper, ginger etc.), Kulmāṣas (gruel), Vellakas (black pepper preparation) and splendid Vālakas (coconut cookies).

25. There were Karkaṭikās (cucumbers) mixed with tender ginger and chillies. There were these types of cooked food and varieties of greens and vegetables.

26-28. O king, they fed eighteen thousand Brāhmaṇas along with their sons residing in Dharmāraṇya. This feeding continued everyday. The Devas fed the Brāhmaṇas, religious students for a thousand years (simultaneously) performing Yajñas.

After exterminating the Daityas, O king, they became free from fear. All the Devas and the groups of Maruts immediately went to heaven.

29-31. So also did all the celestial damsels. (Out of) Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, (Maheśvara) went to the beautiful peak of Kailāsa, (Viṣṇu) to Vaikuṇṭha dear to him, and Brahmā to his extremely auspicious Brahmaloka. All the heaven-dwellers became extremely delighted after reaching the excellent Nandana. Firmly established in their respective abodes, they all became fearless (and carefree).

32-34. After the lapse of a great deal of time, during the transition of Kṛtayuga, a haughty and arrogant demon named Lohāsura

assumed the guise of a Brāhmaṇa and began to assail all the Brāhmaṇas, the most excellent ones among those conversant with Dharma. He beat the merchants and the Śūdras with a stout baton. He destroyed Yajñas and swallowed the articles intended for Homa. He defiled altars and sacred pools on seeing them.

35. With urine and discharge of faeces he defiled holy places. He defiled women through thickets and woods, O king.

36. Then all those Brāhmaṇas being extremely terrified by the demon Lohāsura fled and went to all the ten directions along with their families.

37-38. O king, the merchants too, desperate in their fear, followed the Brāhmaṇas agitated and frightened. After going to a long distance, they reflected and got united with the Śūdras and the Brāhmaṇas. Ultimately they reached an extremely holy but desolate region Muktāraṇya.[1]

39. Not very far (from it) they established a colony, O lord of men. They colonized that village in the name of a merchant[2] (Vaṇija-grāma, mod. Bania, near Vaiśālī?).

40. The village was not named after a Brāhmaṇa because they were afraid of the demon. Since the village was colonized by a merchant named Śaṁbhu, it was given his name.

41-45. It became well-known as Śaṁbhugrāma in the world. Some of the merchants who fled due to fright went to a nearby place and made an excellent colony. Awaiting the arrival of the Brāhmaṇas, they made their abodes there. They named their village Maṇḍala and inhabited it.

Some merchants who strayed away from the group of Brāhmaṇas, took to another way, being overcome with the fear of Lohāsura. After reaching a place not far from Dharmāraṇya, they anxiously pondered: 'What way did we take (and arrived here)? Where did the Brāhmaṇas go (and settle there).' Anxiously pondering thus, they (ultimately) settled there.

46. Since they went along another path they colonized a village known in the world as 'Aḍālañja'.

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1. Muktāraṇya: located near Vaṇija-grāma (mod. Bania, near Vaiśālī). It probably represents the forest of Vaiśālī in the District of Muzaffarpur, Bihar.
—*Studies in Skanda Purāṇa*, p.172.
It is difficult to locate all these villages like Maṇḍala, Aḍālaja, Śaṁbhugrāma but they were most probably round about Dharmāraṇya.

2. '*Vājik*' is probably a misprint for '*Vaṇik*' in this context.

47. O king, the villages were named after the names of the (important) merchants settled therein.

48-51. The merchants and the Brāhmaṇas became confused (*mohaṁ prāptāḥ*) in their great fright. Hence they were called '*Moha.*' Thus destroyed and scattered, they wandered over in the ten directions. Neither the Brāhmaṇas nor the merchants stayed back in Dharmāraṇya. It became devoid of inhabitants. Making this rare jewel among the holy spots and pilgrimage centres a place bereft of Brāhmaṇas and devoid of sanctity, the demon gladly went to his abode.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Greatness of Dharmāraṇya

Vyāsa said:

1. This is the greatness of this holy spot which has been narrated to you. O lord of the earth, it destroys sins incurred in innumerable previous births.

2. It is the holy spot that is the most excellent of all holy spots. It is a great means of achieving prosperity. Formerly it was narrated to Skanda by the intelligent Mahārudra.

3-4. O son of Kuntī, you shall be rid of all sins by taking your holy bath there.

On hearing these words of Vyāsa, Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, entered Dharmāraṇya, O dear one. He was wholly engaged in protection of the good and hence for wiping off all great sins (he went there).

5. He plunged into the holy tanks and pools, visited the shrines. *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* rites were performed by him as he desired.

6. O Mahāsena (Skanda), having been absolved of all sins thus he went back to his city Indraprastha and ruled the earth.

7. If excellent men come to this place and listen to the stories of the lord and the glory of this sacred place, undoubtedly they will have enjoyment of worldly pleasures and salvation.

8-9. After enjoying worldly pleasures, they will enjoy the highest salvation. If Brāhmaṇas read this at the time of Śrāddha, they

uplift all the manes as long as the moon, the sun and the earth exist.

This has been said by the noble-souled Vyāsa born in Dvāpara Yuga.

10. A mortal being whose sins are at the place (office) of Yama, but who comes to this place Dharmāraṇya, shall get the benefit of the Śrāddha at Gayā from the water alone of Dharmavāpī (the holy pool).

11-12. This has been stated by Dharmaputra with a desire for the benefit of the worlds: "Without offering cooked rice, without Darbha grass, and the holy postures (but) merely with the water, the sin committed in the course of ten million births is destroyed. By performing water libations in Dharmavāpī one gets the merit of making gifts at the time of a solar eclipse in the holy spot Kurukṣetra, of a thousand cows of big horns.

13-14. Every activity connected with Dharmāraṇya has been narrated to you. By listening to this a Brāhmaṇa-slayer and cow-killer becomes rid of all sins. By listening to this once, one gets that merit which accrued by offering balls of rice at Gayā twenty-one times.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

*The Greatness of Sarasvatī**

Sūta said:

1. I shall describe to you the greatness of another holy spot and how Sarasvatī was brought to Dharmāraṇya from Satyaloka.

2-6a. The sages saw Mārkaṇḍeya seated comfortably, attended by great sages. He had the brilliance akin to that of the midday sun. He was an expert in all scriptures. He had the power of all the holy spots. He was divine by nature. He was the most excellent of all sages.

He was in Yogic absorption. He was blessed, revered and firm in performing holy vows. He was Yoga incarnate. He was extremely quiescent. He held a Kamaṇḍalu (waterpot), and a rosary.

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* Out of the six different rivers with the name Sarasvatī (De 180-181), the river mentioned here is the Prācī Sarasvatī near Prabhāsa (see vv 11-16).

He was reputed to be alive even at the end of the Kalpa. He was unperturbed and wise. He was steady. He had the lustre of Pitāmaha (Brahmā). He was engaged in meditation. His eyes were fully blossomed with delight. The sages bowed to him and eulogized him.

The sages said:

6b-9. O holy lord, at the time of the *Sattra* lasting for twelve years in the Naimiṣa forest, the river, Brahmā's daughter, had been brought down to the earth in the same manner as Gaṅgā was brought down to the earth there itself.

Formerly in front of Śaunaka, the sage and Kulapati, legends were being sung. At that time, Sage Sūta had announced this, even as others were listening. On hearing that great narrative, this has been impressed in our mind that it is destructive of sins and the mother (generator) of merits in all living beings, even at a mere sight.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

10. O Brāhmaṇas, Sarasvatī was brought to Dharmāraṇya from Satyaloka by me. It was brought to Mountain Surekha so that it would be a refuge to those who seek asylum.

11-16. On the meritorious twelfth day of the bright half in the month of Bhādrapada, one should cause the offering of oblations etc. (to the Pitṛs) on that sacred place Dvārāvatī which is resorted to by sages and Gandharvas. One (thereby) obtains unending merit offered by Pitṛs. This great legend is destructive of sins. It yields merit.

The water of Sarasvatī is holier than all holy things and is annihilator of great sins. It is the most auspicious among auspicious things and merit-yielding. What is there high up (in heaven) which is not in the waters at Prabhāsa? The water of Sarasvatī removes the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter of all men.

Men who take their bath in Sarasvatī and propitiate the Manes and the deities, will have no further occasion to offer balls of rice or to suck the breast (of any woman).

Just as the wish-yielding cows are the bestowers of desired benefits, so also Sarasvatī is the sole means of attaining heaven and salvation.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Greatness of Dvārikā

Vyāsa said:

1-3. The doorway to heaven is opened by Mārkaṇḍeya by bringing down Sarasvatī. Those who cast off their bodies therein with a desire for some benefit, will get that benefit. Ultimately they shall get *Sāyujya* (i.e. intimate communion and absorption) with Viṣṇu. Hence what is the propriety of more talk? People always should renounce their bodies at Dvārāvatī[1] with a desire to conquer (attain) the world of Viṣṇu.

Those excellent men who are (casting their bodies) in water or in unextinguishing fire (?) become absolved of all sins and go to the city of God Viṣṇu.

4. Another man who is free from sickness and observes fast (unto death), becomes free from all sins and goes to the city of Viṣṇu.

5-9. At last for a hundred thousand years, the Brāhmaṇa lives in heaven.

There is nothing more holy and purifying than Brāhmaṇas. There is no other rite in austere penance on a par with fasts. There is no greater scripture than the Vedas. There is no preceptor like mother. There is nothing greater than righteousness. There is no greater penance than observance of (holy) fast.

After taking bath here, if the devotee offers water libations and balls of rice and performs Śrāddha here, his Manes become pleased with him as long as the complete day (the day and night) of Brahmā.

One who bathes in the holy pool there and worships Keśava, shall be free from all sins, and he shall attain the region of Viṣṇu. The spot where Hari is present is the holiest of all holy places.

10. He removes every sin of that man who stays at that (holy spot). (The holy spot) accords salvation to those who desire sal-

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1. Dvārāvatī, Dvārikā, Dvārakā: The city founded by Kṛṣṇa. It is one of the seven "Liberation-giving" (*Mokṣa-dāyikā*) cities in India, the others being Ayodhyā, Mathurā etc. There are three places in Saurashtra claiming to be the "real" Dvārakā. But the claim accepted is of that city where there is the Dvārakādhīśa temple and the seat of Śaṅkarācārya's Maṭha.

vation, wealth to those who seek wealth and longevity, happiness and all desired fruits (to all devotees).

11. What is the importance of other Tīrtha (as compared with this) where God Janārdana always abides out of compassion for all?

12. Whatever small gift is given with great faith there, all of it becomes everlasting in this world and in the next.

13-15. Whatever benefit is obtained by wise people by means of Yajñas, liberal gifts and austerities, is acquired here by means of a holy dip alone by Śūdras who serve well.

He who fasts on the eleventh day (of a lunar fortnight) and performs Śrāddha here, uplifts all his ancestors from hells. There is no doubt about this.

Janārdana, the Supreme Soul, attains everlasting satisfaction. If anything is gifted here with anything in view, that is said to be never-ending.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

The Episode of Balāhaka: The Glory of Govatsa Liṅga

Sūta said:

1. There, very near it (Dvārāvatī), is the holy place named Govatsa, seen by Mārkaṇḍa. It is well-known all over the earth.

2. The Lord of Aṁbikā, the lord of the worlds, had incarnated in the form of a calf of cow and stayed as a self-revealed Liṅga.

3. There was a king named Balāhaka. He was a devotee of Rudra. He was extremely mighty. He, a subjugator of enemies' cities, was keenly engaged in hunting.

4-5. An infantryman of the king saw a cow-calf standing in a herd of deer. The king was informed: "A curious, thing was seen by me, O excellent king. A cow-calf was seen by me standing in the middle of a herd of deer. It had no mother and it was attached to these deer."

6. The king was eager to see it (that curious phenomenon). He asked the infantryman standing in front him to show the cow-calf.

7-8. They went to the forest. The calf was pointed out by the

infantryman to the king. The herd of deer became frightened by the soldier. The cow-calf went towards a grove of palms. Eager to capture it, the king entered the grove carefully.

9. The king himself saw the cow-calf standing there. When he attempted to catch it, it turned into a brilliant Liṅga.

10. On seeing it, the king was surprised and thought, 'What is this?' Even as he thought thus, he cast off the body and went to heaven.

11. In the meantime, all around under the sky, the word "Victory" pronounced by Devas was heard. A shower of flowers fell from the sky and instantaneously the king went to the region of Śiva.

12-13. There he saw the cow-calf of Śiva stationed as a child. (He thought:) 'Certainly this is the great Lord Maheśvara in the form of a calf.' Bent upon taking it away, the king lifted it but that divine Liṅga could not be lifted up. Thereupon the Devas along with him (the king) prayed to the Lord.

The Devas said:

14. O holy lord, lord of all the Devas, your lordship, desirous of the welfare of all the worlds should stay in the form of this white Liṅga.

The great lord said:

15-18. O gods, I shall stay here permanently in the form of a Liṅga. Since this day is the new-moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, if people take their holy bath in accordance with the injunctions and worship the Liṅga, they shall never have anything to fear.

In case some of their ancestors have fallen into the terrible hells of Raurava and Kuṁbhīpāka or in many other hells because of the omission of the offerings of balls of rice and have been rotting there for many years, or have taken birth as brutes, they will have everlasting benefit by offering the balls of rice here once.

19-20. Then King Balāhaka, accompanied by all the Devas, installed that Liṅga in the presence of all the Devas. With a desire for the benefit of all the people, he made many gifts. Even as he was adoring, Rudra himself came there.

Rudra said:

21-25. Never-ending is the merit of those men who worship the

lord of Devas on this night with faith and devotion. Those men who keep awake the whole night singing and discussing the scriptures shall uplift hundred and one members of their families.

The holy spots Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Gayā, Prayāga and Prabhāsa, Dvārakā, Mathurā and Arbuda (Mount Abu) roar (glorify themselves) only as long as the Liṅga, Govatsa (cow-calf), the extremely miraculous Liṅga, is not seen.

Even when some scion of the family feels the inclination to go to Govatsa, all the ancestors of that member certainly feel delighted and dance.

Sūta said:

26. O Brāhmaṇas, listen to another wonderful event that took place there. Merely by listening to it, all sins will be destroyed.

27-28. When the ancient Liṅga was installed by all the gods, due to the merit of the installation by Viṣṇu and all heaven-dwellers, it began to increase everyday. Thereupon men and gods who became afraid sought refuge in him.

Devas said:

29. Check and withdraw your growth (in size), O lord of the worlds. That will bring in the welfare of all the worlds.

When this was requested, an unembodied speech emerged from the Liṅga.

Śiva's Speech said:

30. O people, do not be afraid. Let this remedy be heard. Let a Cāṇḍāla be brought and settled before me permanently.

31. They brought Cāṇḍālas and placed them in front of the deity. Still its growth in size did not stop.

The Speech said:

32-33. May someone who is a Cāṇḍāla by his mean action be placed in front of me, O people.

On hearing that extremely surprising pronouncement, they in-

tended to find one. Searching villages and cities, they saw a sinner of mean action, a sham and a mere namesake of a Brāhmaṇa.

34-35. At midday the cruel fellow used to load bullocks (though) emaciated due to hunger, thirst and fatigue and made them work. Without taking bath, that Brāhmaṇa used to eat stale articles of food. The Devas took him to the place where the lord of the universe was installed.

36-38. Eagerly they made him stand in the foreground of the shrine. Viewed in front of the cow-calf, he became reduced to ash instantly. This spot shall become famous in the world as *Cāṇḍālasthala.* Even today the palatial shrine is not seen by the people standing there. Thenceforth, the Liṅga always assumed its normal state in size. The Brāhmaṇa who had become cleansed of all sins by viewing the Liṅga went to the holy pool.

39-40. After the sins had been removed, he worshipped Govatsa everyday. He went there particularly on the fourteenth day of the miraculous act of the Trident-bearing Lord. He who listens to this story devoutly becomes rid of all sins.

Sūta said:

41-42. This shrine, well-known as Govatsa, is highly conducive to the merit of all men. It has been declared by Mārkaṇḍeya as one that destroys the sins of many births. Holy ablution, had even once in that holy pool, accords the world of Rudra to men. It is to be resorted to for the purpose of purifying the sinful body of those people who are polluted by sins.

43. In Kali age, one gets satisfaction even at the end of a fortnight by performing the *Tarpaṇa* (libation) at the well and *Śrāddha* at the shrine, especially in the month of Bhādrapada.

44. The great satisfaction obtained by the Pitṛs when the *Tarpaṇa* is performed twentyone times at Gayā, is obtained by doing it only once in Gaṅgākūpa.

45. In the vicinity of Govatsa itself stands Gaṅgākūpaka. Those who are propitiated by libations of gingelly seeds therein, attain beatitude.

46. The Pitṛs go to heaven from hell on account of the excellent merit and superior intellect. Great sages praise the gift of cows in that holy spot.

47-48. Making a gift of gold to a Brāhmaṇa takes a man to the

region of Rudra. River Sarasvatī, the shrine of Śiva and Gaṅgā at Gaṅgākūpaka—all these three are in one place, and they are the causes of heaven and salvation. This holy spot resorted to by sages and Siddhas it well-known everywhere.

49. There are two Pīlu trees (variety of palm) in that holy spot. It is resorted to by sages. By taking a holy dip here, one goes to heaven. If the water is drunk, it removes sins and sanctifies the man.

50-53. By glorifying it, one gets more merits. By resorting to it becomes extremely conducive to salvation. Sinners of various sorts such as a Brāhmaṇa-slayer, mother-slayer, killer of children, cow-slayer, murderer of women and Śūdras, one who gives poison, one guilty of arson, those who are bent on tormenting elders, those who censure ascetics, those who commit perjury, one who magnifies the defects of others in his speech and one who wilfully conceals good qualities of others, in fact, one who is guilty of all these sinful deeds, become released (from the sins) by visiting the Liṅga.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Greatness of Holy Spots

Vyāsa said:

(Unnumbered verse) In the south-west of Govatsa, a Lohayaṣṭikā (iron column) is seen. Rudra himself is standing there in the form of a self-born Liṅga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-5. In the dark half of the lunar month Nabhasya (i.e. Bhādrapada) monetary gifts should be given to Brāhmaṇas after worshipping them duly.

By making water libations here, men obtain the same merit as is obtained at Gayā by offering balls of rice twenty-one times devoutly.

If Śrāddha is performed at Lohayaṣṭi in the dark half of Nabhasya

(Bhādrapada), the Pitṛs begin to sport about in heaven freed from the state of being ghosts.

(They yearn) 'Won't someone be born in our family who is ready to offer libations with gingelly seeds, or balls of rice or mere water in the Pretapakṣa (the dark fortnight in Bhādrapada) at the time of moonrise!'

Sages state that if the Manes are dear to them, people should perform Śrāddha at Lohayaṣṭi on the new-moon day.

6. If a person takes bath in the waters of Sarasvatī and propitiates the Pitṛs by means of milk and white gingelly seeds, the Pitṛs certainly become satiated.

7. Those who wish for the salvation of the Pitṛs, should perform Śrāddha with *Saktu* (flour of fried barley) and milk on the new-moon day.

8. He who desires for salvation should offer a cow adorned with clothes etc. at Rudratīrtha. He should offer gold in Viṣṇu Tīrtha.

9. Janārdana himself is present at Gayā in the form of the Pitṛs. Meditating on the Lotus-eyed Lord, one is rid of the three debts.

10-12. After going there, the person should pray to Janārdana, the Lord of Devas: "O lord, I have come to Gayā with a desire to offer balls of rice to the Pitṛs. O Janārdana, this ball of rice is placed in your hand. You alone shall be the giver unto those who have gone to the other worlds." With this Mantra alone, the same should be placed in the hand of Hari. When the moon is waning, on the fourteenth day in the month of Nabhasya, the ball of rice shall be offered. There is no doubt about this that the Pitṛs will have never-ending satisfaction.

13-15. By performing Pitṛ Tarpaṇa at Lohayaṣṭi with devotion, one obtains that merit which one gets by offering balls of rice at Gayā twenty-one times. A person who offers water, obtains satisfaction and never-ending happiness here itself. One who offers fruits gets devoted sons and one who offers freedom from fear gets good health.

Money legitimately earned when offered, even if it be very little, shall yield great merit. By taking the holy bath alone in that holy pool, one shall become a follower of Rudra.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Legend of Lohāsura Concluded*

Sūta said:

1. Henceforth listen to the acts of Demon Lohāsura. I shall also describe the well-known (exploits) of the hundred sons of Bali.

2-4. When the two elderly brothers attained the excellent region, ever since that time, Demon Lohāsura was assailed by the feeling of non-attachment. 'What should I do? Where should I go, to which excellent spot for the purpose of performing penance? Who is that lord to be propitiated by me, whose limit neither gods nor sages nor men know?' He began to think within himself very much. As that noble-souled demon was thinking thus, knowledge dawned on him.

5-7. 'I shall propitiate that Lord alone who is free from blemish; who has Gaṅgā on his head; the Sun and the Moon in his eyes; Lord Nārāyaṇa in the heart and god Brahmā in his waist. Indra and other Devas, after being reflected in his person, visualize their soul like the Sun reflected in water.'

After resolving thus, the Daitya, due to his fright of terrible rebirth, performed very difficult penance that even great-souled persons could not perform.

8. For more than a hundred divine years, he performed the penance (first) by subsisting on mere water, (then) on inhaling the air only and (then) on decaying leaves only.

Thereupon, the Lord, the wielder of an excellent trident, became satisfied.

Īśvara said:

9-10. Welfare unto you; choose whatever is desired by you. Due to the power of your penance, O Lohāsura, there is nothing that cannot be given to you.

On being told thus the Dānava spoke these words to Śaṅkara:

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* There is a close similarity between the legends of Lohāsura and Gayāsura.

Lohāsura said:

11-14. If you are pleased, I shall choose as a boon absence of old age of the body and no fear from death. Let it be in this birth alone, O lord. You must stay within my heart.

"Let it be so," He said to that lord of Dānavas.

After getting the boon from Śiva fortunately, he performed a great penance again on the beautiful banks of Sarasvatī for the purpose of crossing the ocean of worldly existence. The penance continued for thousands, hundred thousands, and millions of years. Lord Indra too began to become afraid of the power of his penance. He became suspicious.

15-19. 'Let me never be brought down from my position by Daitya Lohāsura.' In an invisible form Indra came to the forest of the hermitage and disturbed his penance by shaking the great Asura and striking his body with powerful and cruel blows with fist by ruffians.

The Daitya stopped meditating and looked ahead and saw the attempt at the destruction of the power of penance wrought by Indra. A fight ensued between him and Indra and other ruffians, one against many. In that fight, the Devas were shattered by blows and their bodies became wet with blood. Shouting "Save, save", they sought refuge in Keśava.

Sūta said:

20-23. On hearing the words of the Devas, Vāsudeva, Janārdana, Keśava fought a battle with him for a hundred years. Extremely powerful due to the boon (of Śiva) he vanquished Nārāyaṇa. On being conquered by Lohāsura, Lord Nārāyaṇa invoked again and again Rudra and Brahmā. There was another attempt after their consultation as the body of Daitya Lohāsura became fresh. The next fight between the Daitya and Keśava was very fierce.

24-28. When the Daitya did not die, despite the power of Viṣṇu, Keśava caused him to fall on the ground suddenly. On seeing him fallen supine, the Pināka-wielding Great Lord imposed his form in his heart, though he is formless really. Brahmā stood at the neck of the demon Lohāsura. Standing on his legs, Puruṣottama pressed down his feet.

Though he was bound firmly to the ground, the Daitya got up.

On seeing him standing up and making the excellent Suras fall down, the lotus-seated Virañci (Brahmā) said in his divine speech:

Brahmā said:

29. O demon, O Lohāsura, always preserve your verbal righteousness (true speech). What has been requested for by you of Rudra, has come about to you.

30. I, Viṣṇu and Rudra, we three excellent Suras, shall sit on you till the ultimate annihilation of all living beings.

31. O lord of Dānavas, the attainment of Śiva can be effected only through purity of devotion. How will you entertain the intention of dislodging Śiva?

32. He who tries to shake up the immovable ones, palaces, cities and Brāhmaṇas will be smeared with sin ere long.

33. One who has eschewed truth and piety, is to be shunned like cremation ground. You are truthful of speech. Welfare unto you. Do not displace the deities.

34. One should follow the path whereby the fathers and grandfathers have gone. The path of the good should not be transgressed.

35. O lord of Dānavas, your father gave the three worlds unto Hari, because he was bound by the noose of words (promise). He became the king of Pātāla and ruled it.

36. Similarly you are endowed with devotion to Śiva due to the bonds of words (promise). O lord of Daityas, stay on the earth firmly. Do not transgress your words.

37. We shall grant boons to you; the deities are not to be dislodged.

Vyāsa said:

38. On hearing those words of Brahmā, the lord of Dānavas became pleased. He addressed Brahmā, Keśava and Hara with pleasant words.

Lohāsura said:

39-41. I stay bound by the word and not by your power. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra, these three excellent Suras, will stay on my body. In that case what is it that is not obtained by me? May this body of mine occupied by the three Suras be well-known all over the earth, due to my prowess, O excellent Suras.

* * *

42-43. The three Devas were delighted by the words of Lohāsura. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara replied to him: "Since the Daitya did not swerve from truth due to the binding power of truthful words, delighted and satisfied by that truthfulness, we shall grant unto you what is desired by you."

Brahmā said:

44-50. Ablution, the knowledge of Brahman and abandonment of the body in Dharmāraṇya stationed before Dharmeśvara, are on a par with the same acts (performed) in Gayā.

The Pitṛs in heaven praise the *Tarpaṇa* and *Śrāddha* at the well (Dharmavāpī). They are pleased with the offering of balls of rice as in the case of such offerings at Gayā.

They desire Tarpaṇa rite at the Kūpa (well) in Dharmāraṇya for the purpose of purity. O lord of Dānavas, your body itself shall be a holy spot.

O leader of Dānavas, by performing *Pitṛtarpaṇa* once before Dharmeśvara, the satisfaction will be ten times that of the satisfaction of the Pitṛs which they desire when *Tarpaṇa* is performed at Gayā twenty-one times. It is true undoubtedly.

Let there be never-ending satisfaction of the Pitṛs by the offerings of balls of rice here.

In the midst of the forms of Śiva, the rites of Śrāddha, offering of balls of rice and libations should be performed on the ground in Dharmāraṇya with faith. Similarly in our (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) midst particularly.

51. (*Defective Text*) Your truthfulness unattainable in all the three worlds is stabilised in heaven.

52. By our words and truthfulness that shall be so, O most excellent one among Asuras. Your holy place has become superior even to Gayā, all over the earth.

53. Our occupation of your body is undoubtedly undistracted. We are bound with the bond of truthfulness firmly by you, O sinless one.

Viṣṇu said:

54. The benefit of offering balls of rice at Lohayaṣṭi on the fourteenth day as well as on the new-moon day is known as superior to that of Gayā and Prayāga.

55. On account of the truthfulness of Bali's son, the satisfaction here is great. Do not have any doubt here. We are stationed in your body.

56-58. Sarasvatī of holy waters flowing from the region of Brahmā, shall flood (your) limbs after being united with me. The lord there is Maheśvara as well as the lord dwelling in Dvārakā. Viriñci (Brahmā) is also there. These three holy places will become well-known on the earth, nether regions, heaven and Yama's abode, O most excellent one among Asuras, for the sake of satisfaction of Pitṛs.

59. I shall mention another great couplet (verse) sung by Pitṛs. It is the form of a command unto the sons. Listen to that, O sinless ones.

The Pitṛs said:

60. The holy place in front of Śaṅkara grants the region of Rudra unto men. It is conducive to the purification of the sins of those whose souls are polluted by sins.

61. On being offered water libations with gingelly seeds therein by an excellent intelligent son, the Pitṛs attain the goal of beatitude, even if they be in hell.

62-64. For the salvation of the Pitṛs, they highly praise the gift of cows with the Pitṛs etc. in view, after visiting Rudra and Keśava. We will gain great satisfaction, if balls of gingelly oil-cake are offered on the fourteenth day and on the new-moon day. So also will the *Pitṛtarpaṇa* (water libations unto the Pitṛs). There may be (ancestors) of unknown nativity and *Gotra*. One should offer balls of rice unto them. There is the Vedic Statement that when the ball of rice is offered, all of them go to heaven.

65. When the month of Bhādrapada arrives, those men who desire to attain merit, should eschew all other works and go to Lohayaṣṭikā. Listen to the Mantra for offering balls of rice unto those of unknown names and *Gotra*.

66. "May this ball of rice reach unto those dead ones in the paternal and maternal families and those of our *Gotras*."

Viṣṇu said:

67-70. With this Mantra alone, O excellent one among Asuras, one should offer the ball of rice in front of me on the fourteenth

day in the month of Nabhasya when the moon wanes.

There is no doubt that the satisfaction of the Pitṛs will be never-ending. By the offering of the ball of gingelly oil-cake the Pitṛs shall attain salvation.

By the libation of gingelly seeds at Lohayaṣṭi men all over the world shall be freed from the three debts. There is no doubt about it. If one takes the holy bath here and performs the rites of offering balls of rice and libations to the Pitṛs, they become satisfied over a period of complete day of God Brahmā.

71-72. On the new-moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, the man should perform *Pitṛtarpaṇa* at the Yaṣṭikā near the lake of Brahmā. Thereby his Pitṛs become satisfied until the ultimate annihilation of all living beings. The primordial deity Maheśvara, the lord, shall be pleased with them.

73-75. Those who have an intention of going on a pilgrimage to this holy place, should take their holy bath in the waters of Sarasvatī and perform libations with cow's milk and white gingelly seeds. The satisfaction of the Pitṛs shall be never-ending.

He who wishes for the joy of the Pitṛs, should on the new-moon day perform Śrāddha with *Saktu* (flour of fried barley) and milk. Thereafter, he shall make a gift of cow at Rudratīrtha and of garments at Yamatīrtha.

76. He who wishes for the salvation of the Pitṛs should offer gold at Viṣṇutīrtha. Without Akṣata (raw rice), without Darbha grass, without any seat, one should obtain the benefit of Gayāśrāddha through water libations alone.

Sūta said:

77-79. This act of Lohāsura has thus been narrated to you, O Brāhmaṇas. On hearing it, even a Brāhmaṇa's slayer and a cow-killer become free from all sins.

When this narrative is listened to even once, the devotee attains that benefit which one gets by offering balls of rice in Gayā twenty-one times.

He who listens to this greatness (of this) gets the merit of gifts of forty million two hundred and one thousand and a hundred cows.

CHAPTER THIRTY

*Rāma's Life**

Vyāsa said:

1-5. Formerly, at the advent of Tretā, the lotus-eyed Rāma, a partial incarnation of Viṣṇu, was born in the Solar race, as a scion of the family of Raghu.

Even as they were wearing sidelocks of hair (i.e. were quite young) that Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa followed Viśvāmitra at the behest of their father. It was for the purpose of protecting the Yajña that the princes were entrusted by the king.

The heroic (princes), obeying the order of their father, were on the way holding bows and arrows, when an ogress named Tāḍakā came and stood in front of them for the purpose of creating obstacles.

At the behest of the sage, Rāma killed Tāḍakā. Gādhija (Viśvāmitra) imparted the science of archery to Rāma.

6. At the touch of the sole of his feet, Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama, who had been turned into a rock for her intimacy with Indra, regained her original form.

7. When the sacrifice of Viśvāmitra commenced, the most excellent one among the descendants of Raghu killed Mārīca and Subāhu with his excellent arrows.

8-9. The bow of Īśvara that was kept in the abode of Janaka, was broken. In his fifteenth year, O king, Rāma married the six-year old beautiful daughter of the king of Mithilā,[1] Sītā who was not born of a womb. On getting Sītā, Rāghava became contented and happy.

10. While he proceeded towards Ayodhyā, he saw the son of Jamadagni on the way. Then, O king, a terrible battle unbearable even to the Devas to see ensued between them.

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*From this chapter onwards we are given a version of Rāma's life. It closely follows original Vālmīki's version as it excludes the Uttara-Kāṇḍa. The object of Rāma's story is to glorify Dharmāraṇya by describing his munificent grants to the Brāhmaṇas thereof. But VR does not record it. In VR I.32.6 Dharmāraṇya is the name of a town founded by Amūrtarajas (the son of Kuśa).

1. The custom of child-marriage at the time of this Purāṇa-writer is reflected here.

11. After defeating Paraśurāma, Śrīrāma (the son of Daśaratha) came home accompanied by Sītā. Then he sported along with Sītā for twelve years.

12. In the twenty-seventh year of Rāma, even as the king was to crown him heir apparent to the throne, Kaikeyī requested him for two boons.

13-14. With one of them Rāma accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa was to go in exile wearing matted hair, for fourteen years.[1] "May my Bharata be the heir apparent", was the second (boon). It was due to being deluded by Mantharā's words that she chose this boon.

15-16. The king banished Rāma accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Rāma subsisted on water for three (days and) nights; he had fruits to eat on the fourth day; on the fifth day he camped at Citrakūṭa. Then Daśaratha departed to heaven crying "Rāma".

17. Was it that he went to heaven to make the Brāhmaṇa's curse true? Then Bharata and Śatrughna came to Citrakūṭa.

18-19. They intimated Rāma the departure of their father to heaven. Rāma consoled Bharata and made him (agree) to return. Then Bharata and Śatrughna came to Nandigrāma. Engaged in worshipping the pair of sandals of Rāma, both of them looked after the affairs of the State.

20. After visiting the great-souled Atri, he (Rāma) came to Daṇḍaka forest where, as a beginning of the slaying of hosts of Rākṣasas, he felled (killed) Virādha.

21-24. He stayed in Pañcavaṭī till half of the thirteenth year elapsed It was then that the demoness Śūrpaṇakhā was rendered deformed, while he was wandering about in the forest in the company of the daughter of Janaka. The terrible Rākṣasa came to abduct Sītā. On the eighth day in the dark half of Māgha, on the Muhūrta called Vṛnda, the Ten-headed Demon (Rāvaṇa) abducted Sītā while the scions of the family of Raghu were away. He had gone to the hermitage of Mārīca and had managed to get Rāghava as well as Lakṣmaṇa taken far away through him in the guise of a deer. Then Rāma slew Mārīca who had assumed the form of a deer.

25-28. Coming back to the hermitage again, Rāma saw it bereft of Sītā. (In the mean time) being forcibly taken away, she (Sītā)

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1. This is not correct. Kaikeyī wanted to exile only Rāma. In VR II.11.26a-27b, Kaikeyī asks: "May Rāma be an ascetic in the Daṇḍaka forest for fourteen years." She did not mention the name of Sītā or Lakṣmaṇa at all.

cried out like a *Kurarī* (a female osprey): "O Rāma, Rāma, save me, save me, (from) being abducted by a demon." Hearing that a demon infatuated with passion was carrying off the daughter of Janaka like a hungry falcon lifting away a screaming quail, the king of birds (Jaṭāyu) fought with the king of demons. Struck down by Rāvaṇa, he fell down dead on the ninth day in the dark half of the month of Māgha.

29-30. The two brothers Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa began to search for Sītā who had (by that time) been kept in the abode of Rāvaṇa. On seeing Jaṭāyu, they knew that Sītā was abducted by the Rākṣasa. The bird was cremated by him with devotion.

31-33. Rāma went ahead. Lakṣmaṇa followed his footsteps. They reached the vicinity of Paṁpā and blessed Śabarī. Sipping the water thereof, they saw Hanumān. Rāma made friendship with Hanumān. Then he approached Sugrīva and killed the monkey Vāli. Hanumān and others were sent towards his beloved by Lord Rāma.

34-37. The son of the Wind-god (Hanumān) went on his mission taking the ring (of Rāma) with him. On the tenth month, Saṁpāti informed the monkey about her. Thereupon, at his instance, Hanumān leapt over the ocean a hundred Yojanas wide (a Yojana=12 Kilometers). At night Hanumān searched everywhere all round in the city of Laṅkā. It was at the close of that night that Hanumān could espy Sītā. On the twelfth day (of the lunar fortnight), Hanumān settled on the Śiṁśapā (Aśoka) tree. On that night, he narrated the story (of Rāma) for inspiring confidence in the daughter of Janaka (to believe in him). On the thirteenth lunar day, his fight with Akṣa and others took place.

38-41. The monkey was bound by the miraculous weapon of Brahmā by Indrajit on the thirteenth lunar day. The Son of Wind addressed harsh and terrible words to that lord of Rākṣasas, though he was bound with the miraculous weapon of Brahmā. Laṅkā was burnt with the fire of the ignited end of his tail. The return of the monkey to Mahendra mountain was on the full-moon day. Starting on the first day of the lunar month Mārgaśīrṣa and spending five days on the way (the monkey) returned in a day (?) and at day time destroyed Madhuvana (the Grove of Honey). On the seventh day (took place) the handing over of the token of recognition (the crest jewel of Sītā) and reporting of all the details (to Rāma).

42-45. Sītā's jewel was given. He intimated to Rāma everything. On the eighth lunar day with the asterism Uttarā Phālgunī, in the auspicious hour called Vijaya, at midday, Rāma set off on his march. "Even by crossing the ocean, I will kill the lord of Rākṣasas." After taking this vow, Rāma started southwards. Sugrīva was his companion as he started towards the southern quarter.

Within seven days the army was encamped on the seashore. Beginning with the first day in the bright half of Pauṣa and ending with the third day, Rāma and his army waited on the ocean patiently.

46-47. Vibhīṣaṇa associated with Rāma on the fourth day. A meeting of the council for devising the means of crossing the ocean was held on the fifth day. Rāma observed protest fast unto death for four days. Acquisition of boon from the Ocean along with the direction of the means (to cross the ocean followed).

48. The bridge construction (across the sea) was started on the tenth day and was concluded on the thirteenth day. On the fourteenth day Rāma encamped his army on Suvela mountain.

49-50. Beginning with the full-moon day and ending with the second day (of the dark half), the army took three days to cross. After crossing the ocean Rāma of auspicious features accompanied by the heroic monkeys besieged the city of Laṅkā for the sake of liberating Sītā. The encamping (and deploying) of the army took eight days, beginning with the third day and ending with the tenth day.

51-53. Śuka and Sāraṇa arrived there on the eleventh day. The assessment of the army (was completed) on the twelfth day in the dark half of the month of Pauṣa. The strength and weakness of the leading monkeys was told by Śārdūla.

Beginning with the thirteenth day and ending with the new-moon day, Rāvaṇa assessed his army in the course of the three days and also encouraged them (with due incentives). Aṅgada went as a messenger on the first day in the bright half of the month of Māgha.

54-57. Sītā was shown the magically contrived head of her husband. Beginning with the second day in the bright half of the month of Māgha and ending with the eighth day, for a period of seven days, a fierce fight between the demons and the monkeys (took place).

On the night of the ninth day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were fettered with Nāgapāśa (serpen-

tine noose) in the course of the battle by Indrajit. All the leading monkeys became desperate and bewildered. At the suggestion of Wind-god, Rāghava remembered Garuḍa. For the purpose of releasing them from the serpentine noose, Garuḍa came on the tenth day.

58. There was a temporary truce and cessation of hostilities for two days (inclusive of) the eleventh day in the bright half of Māgha. On the twelfth day Dhūmrākṣa was slain by the son of Añjanā (i.e. Hanumān).

59-63. On the thirteenth day, Akaṁpana too was slain by him in battle. Showing the magically contrived Sītā to Rāma, the Ten-headed Demon terrified all the (monkeys) in the army.

For three days beginning with the fourteenth day in the bright half of Māgha and ending with the first day in the dark half, (there was a continuous fight) and Prahasta was killed by Nīla.

For three days beginning with the second day in the dark half of Māgha and ending with the fourth day, Rāma had a fierce battle with Rāvaṇa and the latter was compelled to flee the battlefield.

Beginning with the fifth day and ending with the eighth day, effort was made by Rāvaṇa to wake up Kuṁbhakarṇa who began to eat incessantly for four days. Kuṁbhakarṇa fought in the battlefield for four days beginning with the ninth day.

64. As he began to eat many monkeys, he was killed by Rāma in the battle on the new-moon day, and there was an end of grief.

65. Beginning with the first day of Phālguna and ending with the fourth day, in the course of four days, five Rākṣasas including Narāntaka were killed.

66-68. Atikāya was killed in a three-day battle beginning with the fifth day and ending with the seventh. Nikuṁbha and Kuṁbha, two deadly Rākṣasas, were killed in the course of five days beginning with the eighth day and ending with the twelfth day. Makarākṣa was killed in four days.

Indrajit had victory on the second day in the dark half of Phālguna. There was a temporary truce for five days beginning with the third day and ending with the seventh day. It was due because there everyone was urgently occupied in the task of bringing the medicinal herbs.

69. The evil-intentioned Rāvaṇa killed a magically created Sītā on the eighth day. Overwhelmed with sorrow, Rāma made the army stop (fighting).

70. Thereafter Indrajit of well-known power and prowess was killed by Lakṣmaṇa in the battle lasting for five days till the thirteenth day.

71. On the fourteenth day there was a cessation of hostilities. Hence the Ten-headed One had an opportunity for preliminary preparation. On the new-moon day Rāvaṇa came for the battle.

72. In the course of the five days beginning with the first day of the bright half of Caitra and ending with *Pañcamī*, Rāvaṇa continued the hostilities and the slaughter of the demons was immense.

73-75. Till the eighth day of the bright half of Caitra, the destruction of the chariots, horses etc. continued. On the ninth day in the bright half of Caitra, when Lakṣmaṇa was pierced with the Śakti (javelin) Rāma became infuriated and routed the Ten-headed One. Hanumān also fought. On the advice of Vibhīṣaṇa he went for bringing the medicinal herb from Droṇādri mountain for Lakṣmaṇa. He brought (the herb) Viśalyā (antidote for wounds) and made Lakṣmaṇa drink it.

76-77. There was cessation of hostilities on the tenth day. At night there was the battle of the demons. On the eleventh day, the (divine) chariot with Mātali as the charioteer, for the sake of Rāma, came there (to help) in the fight. After a battle lasting for eighteen days beginning with the twelfth day (of the bright half) and ending with the fourteenth day of the dark half, Rāma killed Rāvaṇa in a single combat with chariots.

78-80. The cremation of Rāvaṇa and others took place on the new-moon day. In the tumultuous and fierce battle Rāma gained victory.

Beginning with the second day of the bright half of Māgha and ending with the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, the overall extent of the hostilities was a period of eighty-seven days. In the middle, truce was declared for fifteen days. The actual battle took place for seventy-two days. On the first day of Vaiśākha Rāma stayed on the battlefield. On the second day Vibhīṣaṇa was crowned as king of Laṅkā.

81-85. The (test of) purity of Sītā took place on the third day. Boons were granted by Devas. Daśaratha came (from heaven and gave his approval to it).

After slaying the lord of Laṅkā, the lord (Rāma), the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, took with him the meritorious daughter of

Janaka, who had been subjected to misery by the demon and returned with great pleasure.

On the fourth day of Vaiśākha Rāma boarded the aerial chariot Puṣpaka. He returned by air. On the way to the city of Ayodhyā, when the fourteen year period was complete, on the fifth day of the month of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha), Rāma and party camped in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja (? Bharadvāja). He came to Nandigrāma by Puṣpaka on the sixth day.

86-89. The great scion of the family of Raghu was crowned as the king of Ayodhyā on the seventh day.

Maithilī stayed in the abode of Rāvaṇa separated from Rāma for a period of fourteen months and ten days.

Rāma began to rule the kingdom in his forty-second year. Sītā was then thirty-three years old.

At the end of fourteen years Lord Rāma, the destroyer of the pride of Rāvaṇa, gladly entered his city of Ayodhyā. There Rāma ruled the kingdom in the company of his brothers.

90. After ruling the kingdom for eleven thousand years, Rāma went to heaven.

91. In the kingdom of Rāma the people were fully happy in their minds. The men became endowed with riches and grains as well as with sons and grandsons.

92. Clouds showered as much as desired. The vegetation was of good quality. Cows yielded plenty of milk. Trees yielded perpetual fruits.

93. There was neither mental anguish nor illness, O king, in the kingdom of Rāma. All the women were chaste; all the men were devoted to their parents.

94. Brāhmaṇas were devoted to the (study of) Vedas always; Kṣatriyas served Brāhmaṇas. Men of Vaiśya caste continued to be devoted to Brāhmaṇas and cows.

95. There was no mixture of castes and no transgression of duties. There was no barren or wretched woman; no woman had only a single child or had her child dead.

96. There was no widow; nor a woman with a husband bewailed at any time. None disregarded or insulted parents, preceptors and elders.

97. No meritorious person transgressed the words of old people; no one misappropriated other person's land and property. People were not covetous of other men's wives.

98. People were not bent upon slander. There was no indigent or sickly man. There was no thief, gambler, liquor-addict or sinner.

99. There was no thief of gold, no Brāhmaṇa's slayer, defiler of preceptor's bed, slayer of woman, murderer of children and speaker of falsehood.

100. There was no one wilfully depriving another of his livelihood; there was no perjuror, no rogue, no ungrateful wretch and no dirty person was seen.

101. Brāhmaṇas, the masters of the Vedas, were honoured always and everywhere. There was no anti-Vaiṣṇava or one not adhering to his vows, O king, in the famous kingdom of Rāma.

102-103. While he was ruling the kingdom his eloquent priest Vasiṣṭha, a son of Brahmā, returned after performing pilgrimage to various places. That illustrious storehouse of austerities accompanied by sages was duly honoured as his preceptor.

104. Rāma honoured him by standing up and offering *Arghya, Pādya, Madhuparka* and other things of worship.

Vasiṣṭha, the eminent sage, enquired about Rāma's welfare:

105. "O Rāma, is there all-round welfare in the kingdom, cavalry, elephants, army, treasury—nay in the entire land, your brothers and your servants?" When the sage asked thus Rāma said:

106. "With the favour of Your Holiness I have all-round welfare." Then Rāma enquired about the welfare of the great Sage Vasiṣṭha:

107-109. "I hope you are happy in the company of your wife and sons."

He (the sage) narrated everything to him about all the holy places resorted to by him all over the earth—all the shrines and holy pools. Thereupon, the lotus-eyed Rāma who was curious, asked him about the greatness of the holy places and also wanted to know which of them was the most excellent one.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

Rāma's Pilgrimage to Dharmāraṇya

Śrī Rāma said:

1-2. O holy lord, which is the holiest of these holy places that were resorted to by you. O bestower of honour, mention that to me. Brahma-Rākṣasas have been slain by me in connection with Sītā's abduction. Name the most excellent of the holy places for the purpose of freedom from that sin.

Vasiṣṭha replied:

3. These rivers are extremely holy and purificatory: Gaṅgā, Narmadā (Revā), Tāpī, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Gaṇḍakī, Gomatī and Pūrṇā.

4. Among these, Narmadā is the most excellent. Gaṅgā that courses through three paths (of heaven, earth, and nether world) burns sin entirely, O Rāghava, by her mere sight.

5. In Kali Age, by her mere sight Revā destroys sins accumulated during a hundred births. By going to her (she annihilates the sins accrued in) three hundred births and by taking one's ablution in her she destroys (the sins accumulated in) a thousand births.

6. After resorting to the banks of Narmadā, if only a single Brāhmaṇa could be fed and that too only with greens, roots and fruits, one shall obtain the benefit of feeding ten million (Brāhmaṇas).

7. One who utters the name "Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā" from a distance of even hundreds of Yojanas away, becomes rid of all sins and goes to the region of Viṣṇu.

8-11. He who performs the rites of holy bath, *Pitṛ-Tarpaṇa* and offering of balls of rice after reaching Gaṅgā on the new-moon day towards the close of Phālguna (Feb.-March) and in the dark half of Proṣṭhapada i.e. Bhādrapada (Aug.-Sept.), obtains never-ending benefit.

In the month of Śuci (Jyeṣṭha and Āṣāḍha i.e. May-June-July) he who takes a holy dip in Tāpī,* O king, does not see (any of) the eighty-four hells. The very remembrance of Tapatī (i.e. Tāpī), O

* As vv 3 and 10 show, 'Vāpī' in the printed text is a misprint for Tāpī.

Rāma, uplifts seven Gotras and a hundred and one members of the family of even the worst of sinners.

By taking the holy dip in Yamunā one becomes rid of all sins.

12. Even if he has committed the greatest of sins he attains the highest of goals.

In the month of Kārttika (October-November) on the asterism of Kṛttikā (Pleiades), a person should take the holy bath in Sarasvatī.

13-16a. He shall go (to heaven) seated on Garuḍa and eulogized by excellent Suras.

In the month of Kārttika, by taking the holy bath at the place where Sarasvatī flows eastwards and by eulogizing Prācīmādhava (Lord Viṣṇu facing the East) one attains the highest goal.

One who takes a holy dip in the sacred river Gaṇḍakī and worships Śālagrāma stone, shall never again become a sucker of (mother's) breasts (i.e. is never born again).

A devotee shall take the holy dip in the vicinity of Kṛṣṇa in the watery billows of Gomatī. That man becomes four-armed and rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha for a long time.

16b-21a. A man who bows down to Carmaṇvatī (Chambal) and sprinkles her water (over himself), redeems members of his family, ten preceding and ten succeeding. By seeing the confluence of two (rivers) or by hearing the sound of the Sea, even one defiled by the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, becomes pure and attains the highest goal.

One who takes a holy bath in Prayāga, in the month of Māgha, enjoys happiness in this world and goes to Viṣṇu's region in the end.

Those men, O Rāma, who remain celibate for three nights, shall never see the world of Yama as well as the hells Kumbhīpāka etc. A man who permanently resides in the forest Naimiṣāraṇya shall attain godhood. That alone is a rare abode of gods on the earth.

21b-22a. O Rāma, O eminent king, at the time of a solar or lunar eclipse, if a man makes the gift of gold in Kurukṣetra, he never again becomes the sucker of breasts (i.e. gets Mokṣa).

22b-30a. By the holy visit to Śrīsthala a man becomes free from sin. He is honoured in the region of Viṣṇu when all the miseries are quelled.

A man who makes a gift of plots of land or of a cow on the earth, O Rāghava, goes to the region of the Sages, the residence of all wish-yielding cows.

One should take the holy bath in Śiprā at Ujjayinī in the month of Vaiśākha. He shall be able to redeem thousands of his ancestors from Raurava, a terrible hell.

He who takes a holy bath in Sindhu, O Rāma, for three days, becomes purified of all his sins and rejoices in Kailāsa.

A man who takes a holy dip in Koṭi Tīrtha and visits Śiva called Koṭīśvara, is never tainted by Brāhmaṇa's slaughter and other sins.

All sins perish by drinking the water arising from the feet of even ignorant brutes moving about in great rubbish.

A man who bathes in Vedavatī[1] at the time of splendid sunrise, shall be rid of all illnesses. He shall attain great happiness.

All the holy pools and places, O Rāma, everywhere sportingly quell all the sins of men, through baths, plunges and sippings (of water).

30b-33. They call Dharmāraṇya the greatest of all holy places. It was the holy place established at the outset formerly by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others. Among all the *Araṇyas* (forests) and particularly the holy places, there is nothing more conducive to worldly enjoyments and salvation.

In heaven, gods praise the inhabitants of Dharmāraṇya: "They are the meritorious ones; they are the holy ones who reside in Dharmāraṇya in Kali age." O Lord Rāma, it is destructive of all sins.

34-35. By plunging into (inhabiting?) Dharmāraṇya, all these sins of the people become reduced to ash: Sins such as Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, those arising from stealing all kinds of things, contacts with other men's wives, eating forbidden foodstuffs, carnally approaching prohibited women and touching those whose touch is to be avoided.

36. A Brāhmaṇa-slayer, an ungrateful one, a murderer of children, a speaker of falsehoods, a slayer of women and cows, and a destroyer of villages become free (from their sins) at Dharmāraṇya.

37. There is nothing holier in the case of sinful beings on the earth. (No other holy spot) is as much conducive to the attainment

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1. De (28) identifies this with two different rivers: (1) Hagari, a tributary of the Tungabhadra in the district of Bellari and (ii) Varadā (Vardā) a southern tributary of Krishna.

of heaven, fame, long life and desired objects as Dharmāraṇya.

38. It is declared that Dharmāraṇya is a holy place that fulfils the desires of lovers, gives salvation to ascetics and supernatural powers to Siddhas in every age.

Brahmā said:

39-40. On hearing the words of Vasiṣṭha, Rāma, the most excellent one among upholders of virtue, felt great delight causing thrill to his heart. Hairs stood on ends. The heart blossomed as it were. Rāma, the observer of auspicious vows, resolved to go there.

41-42. It is a holy place where worms, birds, animals and men become rid of all sins by merely resorting to it for three nights.

Just as, O Rāma, Kuśasthalī,* Kāśī, the Trident-bearing Lord, and Bhairava accord salvation, so also the most excellent holy spot Dharmāraṇya.

43-47. Thereupon Rāma, the wielder of a great bow, became extremely glad and started on his pilgrimage along with Sītā and his brothers. Then all these followed him: Hanūmān, the lord of monkeys, Kausalyā, Sumitrā, Kaikeyī who were glad (to accompany), Lakṣmaṇa who was endowed with all (auspicious) characteristics, the highly intelligent Bharata, Śatrughna accompanied by his army, the residents of Ayodhyā and the Council of Ministers. O tiger among men, they all were extremely glad. They followed him and went to Dharmāraṇya. The king (i.e. Rāma) who started from his abode to perform pilgrimage spoke thus, O king, to Vasiṣṭha, his family priest:

Śrīrāma said:

48. This is indeed very surprising. Was it older than Dvārakā? How long has it been in existence? O Vasiṣṭha, tell this to me.

Vasiṣṭha said:

49-50. O great king, I do not know since when and how long it (this Dharmāraṇya) has been. Lomaśa and Jāmbavān may know

* An anachronism. Rāma belonged to Tretā while Kuśasthalī (Dvārakā) was founded by Kṛṣṇa in Dvāpara.

the reason thereof. Whatever sin is committed by the body in the course of different births, this holy shrine is known as the means of expiation for all of them.

51. On hearing these words, Rāma, the most excellent one among wise people, resolved in his mind to go to the holy place and performed the due rites before proceeding on the pilgrimage.

52-53. Keeping Vasiṣṭha at the head, he performed the *Puraścara* rite (initiatory and preparatory) along with other great rulers and proceeded towards the North. (Then) keeping Vasiṣṭha in front he proceeded to the West. He crossed village after village, country after country and forest after forest.

54. Passing on, Rāma set off along with his army and retinue, thousands of elephants and horses, tens of millions of chariots and vehicles.

55. Rāghava set out with innumerable palanquins. Seated on an elephant, he viewed the different friendly countries.

56. Rāma moved on with the white umbrella held aloft and the auspicious chowries waved by a crowd of people.

57. Rāma proceeded ahead joyously, eulogized by the bards, accompanied by the sonorous sounds of musical instruments, dances and songs.

58-62. On the tenth day the excellent Dharmāraṇya was reached. Not far from it, Rāma saw a provincial town. There he camped along with his army for the night.

He heard from the people that the shrine was desolate. It was terrible as it was infested by tigers and lions and resorted to by Yakṣas and Rākṣasas. On hearing that Dharmāraṇya had literally become a forest, Lord Rāma told the bold merchants living there, who were diligent in their business, "Do not worry".

He called together some able-bodied powerful men of great prowess, capable of doing their jobs efficiently and spoke to them thus:

63-64a. "Do not tarry; take my bright-coloured golden palanquin quickly so that I can go to Dharmāraṇya instantly. The devotee is rid of all sins by taking bath there and drinking the holy water."

64b-68a. Urged by Rāma, all those merchants said, "Yes" and bore the palanquin. When Rāma and the army reached the middle of the holy place, O descendant of Bharata, the speed of the vehicle became slowed down. The musical instruments became

reduced in the loudness of the sound. The elephants began to walk very slowly. The horses too came to be like those (slowed down elephants). Rāma was surprised. Humbly he asked the great sage Vasiṣṭha, his preceptor: "O lord of sages, how have these become slow in their movement? It surprises my heart."

68b-69. The sage capable of knowing the events of the three (past, present and future) divisions of time said: "We have reached the Dharmakṣetra. O Rāma, people have to walk on foot to the ancient shrine. If that is done, the soldiers will become happy."

70. Thereupon, Rāma accompanied by the army went on foot. The great promoter of welfare reached the village Madhuvāsanaka.

71-75. In accordance with the instruction of his preceptor, he performed worship of the Mothers, with various offerings of different kinds and accompanied with the due rites of installation.

Then Rāma visited Harikṣetra on the southern bank of Suvarṇā. He saw many grounds worthy of being used as grounds for sacrifice. Rāma, the scion of the family of Raghu, considered himself as one who had fulfilled all the tasks.

After going round the Dharmasthāna on the northern bank of Suvarṇākṣā and having taken the hosts of army across, he wandered in the middle of the holy place.

There, in all the holy places and sacred shrines, Rāma performed the stipulated rites in accordance with the injunctions; with great faith he performed the Śrāddha rites duly.

76-77. He installed Rāmeśa and Kāmeśvara on both the banks of Suvarṇā to the north-west of the holy place. After performing these, Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, considered himself as one who had done his duty. After concluding all the rites, he sat in the assembly.

78-79. That night the descendant of Raghu slept on the banks of the river. At midnight, the lotus-eyed Rāma woke up. The king, fond of virtuous activities, was alone then. Rāma presently heard the cry of a woman.

80. At night, she was lamenting like a female osprey, in a piteous voice. Agitated much Rāma made his spies look up to her.

81. On seeing the excited and bewildered woman crying piteously, the miserable one was asked by Rāma's messengers, O sinless one:

The messengers asked:

82-85. O fair lady, who are you? Are you a goddess or a demoness? By whom have you been frightened? By whom has your money been robbed?

Unnerved and dispirited, you are crying out terribly again and again. Speak out the exact situation. It is Rāma, the king, who asks.

She said: "O messengers, send your master to me. I shall speak to him, about my worry for the purpose of quelling it."

Saying "Alright", the messengers came to Rāma and said:

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Satyamandira Established

Vyāsa said:

1-6. Thereupon those messengers of Rāma bowed down to Rāma and spoke: "O Rāma, O mighty one, an excellent lady of splendid countenance (was seen by us). On seeing that lonely lady bedecked in excellent garments and ornaments and sweet-speaking, lamenting loudly, we became surprised. We went near her and the celestial beauty was asked: "Who are you, O excellent divine lady? Are you a goddess or a demoness, O lady? It is Rāma who asks you. Tell all facts to us." On hearing those words, that lady spoke sweet words· "Welfare unto you all. Send Rāma (here) who will be the proper man to remove my misery." On hearing it, Rāma hastened there with excitement. On seeing her distressed with grief, he too became very miserable. With palms joined together, Rāma said:

Śrīrāma said:

7. O splendid lady, who are you? Whose wife (are you)? By whom have you been abandoned in this lonely place? By whom has your money been robbed. O mother, speak everything to me.

8-9. After saying thus, the extremely miserable Rāma, the most

excellent one among intelligent persons, who appeared like another Discus-bearing Lord, prostrated before her like a straight log.

Rāma also was saluted in return by her and bowed to again and again. He was eulogized in sweet words by her, since she was extremely delighted:

10-18. "O Supreme Soul, O great ruler, O eternal one, O remover of miseries! The task for which you have taken the incarnation has been carried out by you.

Innumerable demons have been vanquished by you on the battlefield. They are terrible fellows like Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, Khara, Dūṣaṇa, Triśiras, Mārīca, Akṣakumāra, Indrajit and others.

How can I adequately describe your excellent form, O lord of the worlds? Brahmā born of the lotus coming out of your body, saw the entire universe embedded therein, just as a leaf of a banyan tree is regarded as the banyan tree itself. Blessed is Daśaratha in the world and Kausalyā, your mother, inasmuch as, O Govinda, the lord of the universe, you, the Supreme Being, were born of them.

Blessed is that family, O Rāma, wherein you came (were born) yourself. Blessed is the city of Ayodhyā, O Rāma, and blessed are the people who have resorted to you.

Blessed is Poet Vālmīki by whom, through his intelligence, Rāmāyaṇa was composed in advance for prominent Brāhmaṇas.

This family too has been excessively sanctified by you, O Lord.

You are a part of Viṣṇu but are being remembered as a king by people. Possessing excellent and charming good qualities, you yourself are verily Viṣṇu.

You pre-meditated on some task (to be accomplished) for the good of the universe and have taken the incarnation. May you have no impediments while carrying it out here, O dear one."

19. She eulogized Rāma in her speech, and said: "While you are the ruler at present, I have been desolate for a long time, as if it is a fault (of mine).

20. Know me to be the presiding deity of the holy place Dharmāraṇya. I have been extremely miserable for the last twelve years that have elapsed.

21-23. O highly intelligent one, remove my desolate state today. O Rāma, all the Brāhmaṇas and all the merchants have fled to all the ten quarters and they are extremely distressed wherever they stay now.

That Daitya who terrified all the Devas has been killed by the Devas themselves. The unassailable Daitya of great Māyā (deception) had attacked this place. Hence those people do not come. They are extremely terrified and suspicious of him.

24-34. For twelve years till date, the whole place is like a place bereft of any protector. It is no better than a desolate house.

People used to take holy ablutions and perform *Dāna* rites in many tanks here. Today pigs fall therein.

Where women enjoyed aquatic sports in the company of their husbands, there buffaloes plunge themselves into the water-tanks.

In the place where bunches of flowers lay scattered profusely, thorny shrubs and hedges abound now. It is infested by tigers and lions.

In the grounds where boys incessantly played about, cubs of panthers* are roaming and playing with great delight.

Where the Brāhmaṇas chanted Vedic hymns continuously, terrible howls of jackals are heard there.

Where formerly the (fragrant) smoke from Agnihotra sacrifices was seen coming up in every house very widely, immense forest fires are visible with profuse smoke there.

Where dancers used to perform dance programmes in front of the Brāhmaṇas, there deluded ghosts and vampires continue their disgusting devilish dances.

Where kings used to hold courts and take counsels, there wild oxen, bears and porcupines lie relaxing.

Where formerly there were abodes of the Brāhmaṇas and the merchants, there are now seen paved floors full of hollows. The hollows of trees form their windows everywhere.

Where quadrangular lofty altars made for sacrifices occurred before, there they are now seen covered by anthills.

35-36. O Rāma who are excellent among kings, know that my abode has become of this sort. Since it is totally desolate, it is not fit for dwelling. Hence the Brāhmaṇas went away. Therefore, I am excessively miserable. Hence, save me, O lord of men."

On hearing this, Rāma, foremost among eloquent persons, spoke thus:

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* *Citraka* is a hypersanskritisation of the new Indo-Aryan word '*Cītā*'.

Śrīrāma said:

37-38. I do not know your Brāhmaṇas who have resorted to all the four quarters. I do not know the number of these Brāhmaṇas nor their names and *Gotras*.

Therefore kindly tell me the names of their Gotras and kinsmen correctly. Then I shall bring them all and rehabilitate them in their respective places.

Śrīmātā said:

39-43. Eighteen thousand Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas and divided into sixty-four Gotras were established, O lord of men, by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa. They are well-known in the world as conversant with the Vedic sciences, O king of immeasurable splendour.

Śrīmātā taught the Vedic science to these well-established Brāhmaṇas of sixty-four Gotras. All of them are excellent Brāhmaṇas. There were thirty-six thousand righteous merchants. It should be known that they were of noble conduct. They were eagerly engaged in serving the Brāhmaṇas.

The deity Bah(?k)ulārka shines here along with Goddess Saṁjñā. So also the twin gods, Aśvins. Dhanada (Kubera) meets all the expenses. I am known, O Rāma, by the name Bhaṭṭārikā. I am the presiding deity.

Śrī Sūta said:

44. The special code of conduct and formalities pertaining to the holy place and the special traditional family observances—everything was described by Śrīmātā in the presence of Rāma.

45-47. Hearing her words, Rāma was delighted: "Truth, truth, again it is the real truth! Truth has been spoken by you. Since the truth has been spoken by you, I shall colonise a splendid city by that name. O Mother of the universe, it shall be (known as) 'Satyamandira'. May this Satyamandira of excellent nature be well-known in all the three worlds."

48. After saying this, Rāma despatched a hundred thousand of his servants for the purpose of bringing back the Brāhmaṇas.

[Rāma ordered:]

49-53. "Wherever the excellent Brāhmaṇas, the former residents of Dharmāraṇya, might have gone, (whether to) countries,

zones, forests, banks of rivers, plots bordering the holy spot or villages in different areas, immediately bring them here after honouring them with *Arghya, Pādya* etc.

I shall take food here only when I see the excellent Brāhmaṇas (back). He who comes here after insulting these Brāhmaṇas shall be deemed worthy of being killed, punished or exiled from the country."

On hearing that terrible, unbearable and unassailable order, the messengers complying with the orders of Rāma, went to all the ten directions.

54. The Brāhmaṇas were duly traced. On meeting them all were delighted. The (servants) worshipped and honoured them in accordance with the stipulated injunctions.

55-59. They duly eulogized with humility and conventional reverence. Addressing all the Brāhmaṇas, they proclaimed to them the words of Rāma.

Thereupon, all those Brāhmaṇas accompanied by the servants began to get ready for going. The Brāhmaṇas engrossed in Vedic and scriptural studies approached Rāma with due honour and veneration.

On seeing the Brāhmaṇas arrived, the king, the son of Daśaratha, had his hair standing all over his body (through a thrill of joy). He considered himself as one who had successfully achieved his task.

He hastily got up, extremely thrilled (with joy) and walked ahead on foot. He knelt before them with palms joined together and shed tears of joy. He spoke thus:

60. "With the favour of Brāhmaṇas, I have become the consort of Kamalā (Lakṣmī). Due to the favour of Brāhmaṇas I have become the uplifter of the earth. With the favour of Brāhmaṇas I have become the lord of the universe. With the favour of Brāhmaṇas I have become known by the name of Rāma."

61-65. Saying thus, the Brāhmaṇas were made greatly delighted by Rāma. They revered him with good wishes of victory and blessed him to be long-lived.

They were won over by Rāma with *Pādya, Arghya* and offering of seats. He prostrated before them and eulogized them. Standing with joined palms, he bowed down to their feet.

Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, offered to them different kinds of seats and golden ornaments.

He gave them rings and garments, sacred threads and ear-rings.

He gave cows of different colours to the prominent Brāhmaṇas. To each of them he gave a hundred cows along with their calves. All of them had udders as big as pots. Cloths were spread over the cows. Bells were tied round their necks. Their horns were bedecked (capped with) in gold, their hoofs with silver, and their backs with copper. Brass vessels too were given to them in addition.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Rāma Returns to Ayodhyā

Rāma said:

1-5. At the behest of Śrīmātā, I shall repair the ruins of the holy place. I may be permitted. I shall make gifts unto you duly.

After performing an excellent Yajña, O Brāhmaṇas, gifts should be given to deserving persons. Nothing is to be given to an undeserving person. If given, it cannot be conducive to happiness.

A deserving person shall redeem both (the giver and the receiver) like a boat. An underserving person should be known as similar to a ball of iron which is of a destructive nature.

O Brāhmaṇas, Brāhmaṇahood does not come up automatically by birth alone. Brāhmaṇical action has the power in the world. How can there be the fruit, if a man does not act (in a Brāhmaṇic way)?

Hence, really venerable Brāhmaṇas, truthful in utterance, should be highly venerated when the rite of Yajña is to be performed. May you all be pleased to have mercy on me.

Brahmā said:

6-9. Thereafter all of them assembled and consulted one another. Some of them said to Rāma then: "We live on gleanings of ears of corn. We are absolutely contented and we are devoted to righteousness. We have nothing to do with the acceptance of gifts.

A potter is on a par with ten *Sūnās* (Sūnā=butcher's place). A seller of liquor is on a par with ten potters. A harlot is on a par

with ten distillers and liquor vendors. A king is on a par with ten harlots.

Acceptance of gift from kings is terrible. Undoubtedly this is true, O Rāma. Hence we do not wish the acceptance of a gift, as it is terrible."

10. Some Brāhmaṇas observed the vow of taking food once a day. Some were observing *Amṛta-vṛtti* i.e. subsistence on what one gets without asking or begging from another person. Some were called *Kumbhīdhānya* as they stored grain in one pitcher only (not more than that); while some were engaged in the six duties of Brāhmaṇas (viz. performing sacrifice as a Yajamāna, sacrificer or conducting another person's sacrifice, studying and teaching the Vedas, giving and accepting gifts).

11-19. All of them have different attitudes and qualities. They have been installed by the three gods. Some of them said: "O Brāhmaṇas, how can we accept gifts without clear instructions from the three gods? We do not even chew betel-leaves prepared and offered by a woman as it is said to be a gift."

Thereupon, Rāma consulted the noble-souled Vasiṣṭha. Along with his preceptor, he remembered Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others. Even as they were remembered, those gods came to that place. They came in groups of chariots shining like millions of suns. They were suitably worshipped by Rāma with great joy. Everything was intimated to them by Rāma, the highly intelligent one:

"At the bidding of the presiding deity I am repairing the ruins in the holy place of Viṣṇu in Dharmāraṇya near Dharmakūpa ('well of piety')."

Then, all those Brāhmaṇas made obeisance to the three gods with great delight, since their desires were fulfilled. Offering *Arghya, Pādya* etc. in accordance with the stipulated injunctions, they worshipped them with great faith.

After resting for a short while, those Devas—Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others, spoke to Rāma of great power, who stood with joined palms due to humility.

The Devas said:

20-24. Since, O Rāma, the enemies of Devas, Rāvaṇa and others, have been slain by you, all of us are delighted thereby, O crest-jewel of the solar dynasty. Reconstruct the great holy place and attain great fame (thereby).

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On getting their permission, the son of Daśaratha was delighted. Desirous of obtaining infinite merit by the reparation of the ruins (ruined holy place), the lord of the earth commenced the work in the very presence of the Devas.

He constructed an altar on the levelled ground in the east. It was splendid and huge like a great mountain. On it he built the external halls, the domestic halls and many Brahmaśālās of splendid shapes and types.

25-27. They were equipped with reservoirs and domestic utensils. They were full of crores of gold pieces and filled with juice, garments etc. They were richly furnished with wealth and grains. They contained all metals. After completing all these, he gave them unto the Brāhmaṇas. Ten cows yielding plenty of milk were given to each. Four thousand four hundred villages also were given to each.

28-32. Rāma gave these to the Brāhmaṇas who were masters of three Vedas. Those excellent Brāhmaṇas were established by the three gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Hence they became famous as *Trayīvidyas.*

After making wonderful gifts of this sort to the Brāhmaṇas, the lord of men considered himself as one who had done his duty. When the ruins were repaired, the Brāhmaṇas who were formerly settled by gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara were worshipped by Rāghava. Thirty-six thousand excellent merchants possessing cows were given by the Devas Viṣṇu, Śiva and others to them, for the sake of attending upon them. Wisdom was granted to them by the delighted Śiva.

33. White horse and chowries were given to them. A dazzling sword was also given. Thereafter, they were urged to serve the Brāhmaṇas.

34. During the rites of marriage etc., there must always be the chowries. They are extremely auspicious. A splendid sword should be held then in the hand as my symbol.

35. The worship of the preceptor should always be performed and also that of the family goddess. Again and again in times of prosperity, monetary gifts conducive to affluence should be made.

36. On the eleventh day in a lunar fortnight and on Saturday, monetary gifts should be given to Brāhmaṇas old and young by "my" i.e. Rāma's order.

37. Merchants in the districts (Maṇḍalas) who were pure and

engaged in their mercantile business were made special executors of Rāma's order (to the service of Brāhmaṇas). These (merchants) were a hundred and twenty-five thousands.

38. King, the rulers of districts, şhould be known as *Māṇḍalīkas*. Those excellent Vaiśyas (merchants) were given by Rāma for the purpose of attending upon the Brāhmaṇas.

39. Rāma gave with due installation ceremony two chowries and a sword to the Sun-god, his family deity.

40. He installed Brahmā along with the four Vedas, and also Śrīmātā of great power as well as Hari, the lord of the sky.

41. For the purpose of removing obstacles, he installed Gaṇa (Gaṇeśa) stationed in the south doorway as well as other deities.

42-46. Seven-storeyed palaces were caused to be built by that heroic person.

Whenever a.person performs any (howsoever minor) auspicious rite conducive to prosperity, such as birth of a son, post-natal rites of a child, the first occasion of feeding a child, tonsure, performance of a hundred thousand or ten million Homas, performance of sacrificial rites, worship of the foundation-deity of a house or the pacificatory ceremony of Planets or any great festival—whatever gift in the form of money or food-grains, garment, cows, gold as well as silver, he gives to Brāhmaṇas, Śūdras, destitutes, helpless and blind ones, first of all he should always give the share of Bakulārka and Śrīmātā for the purpose of completing the work without obstacles.

47. "If transgressing my injunction, a man does it otherwise, there shall undoubtedly be obstacles in his rites."

48-52. After saying thus, with a delighted mind, Rāma caused all these things to be built: tanks dedicated to the Devas, splendid ramparts with all the requisite adjuncts of a fortress, extensive main streets, pools, lakes and tanks. He caused Dharmavāpīs and wells to be dug. So also other wells created by the Devas. After extensively building these in the charming holy place of Dharmāraṇya he gave them to the chief Brāhmaṇas among Traividyas with great faith. He who goes against Rāma's edict inscribed on copper plates or omits anything, has his ancestors fall into hell. Thereafter there shall be no progeny.

Then he called the son of Wind-god. Rāma said to him:

53-54. "O great hero, O son of Wind-god, you shall be worshipped. For the sake of protecting this holy place, you maintain

your presence here."

The son of Añjanā bowed down and accepted that command with his head.

After repairing the ruins (of shrines thereof) thus, Rāghava became one who had perfectly accomplished his task.

55-58. With a delighted inner soul (mind), he worshipped Śrīmātā and bowed to her. He also bowed to other holy places.

The Devas including Brahmā returned to their respective abodes.

They granted blessings to Rāma: "All your desires will be fulfilled. The rehabilitation and establishment etc. of the Brāhmaṇas has been done excellently well by you. Something endearing to us also has been done by you, the meritorious one."

Eulogizing Rāma thus, those Devas went to their respective abodes.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Rāma's Copper-plate Grant to Brāhmaṇas

Vyāsa said:

1. It was thus that the ruins were repaired by Rāma formerly, O knower of Dharma, for the good of the Brāhmaṇas, at the direction of Śrīmātā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

2. What was the letter of authority written by Rāma formerly, O Brāhmaṇa, in Tretā, at Satyamandira? Kindly tell me.

Vyāsa said:

3-5. When Bakulārka was installed well in the excellent divine Dharmāraṇya, when Lord Nārāyaṇa, the overlord of the desolate land, remained among prominent Brāhmaṇas, when the omniscient Lord Gaṇanāyaka was installed as the lord of protection, where the Yoginī is the deity of redemption for those who are immersed in the ocean of worldly existence, there the letter of authority in the name of Rāghava was written in accordance with the scriptures on a copper plate.

6-11. It is extremely surprising. It had been there for many long eons. All metals get destroyed. Even gold perishes. But, O son, this is directly perceived that the edict authorizing the Brāhmaṇas remains intact. There is no destruction of copper.

There is a cogent reason thereof. Whatever is said in the Vedas is said to be Viṣṇu himself. O descendant of Bharata, Viṣṇu resorting to various forms is praised in the Purāṇas, Vedas and scriptural texts. Viṣṇu alone is being meditated upon thus by people adhering to different creeds in different countries and religious orders of various sorts.

That eternal Puruṣa, the most excellent of all persons, has directly incarnated for the purpose of destroying the enemies of gods and for the protection of religious values. Hence, this letter of authority granted by him is indestructible, O son.

12-15. It was due to his majestic power that the rocks remained floating in the middle of watery expanse; Laṅkā was besieged by the monkeys and the Rākṣasas were killed easily. Rāma brought back the son of a sage from the world of Yama. It was by him that Dundubhi and Kabandha were killed. Tāḍakā was killed and a row of seven palm trees was pierced. Khara, Dūṣaṇa, the great demon Triśiras and fourteen thousand other demons were killed in battle instantly. And this letter of authority was issued by him. How can it not be everlasting?

16-20. He himself described his family there and got the name of the place and time written duly. The son of Daśaratha, Rāma, in his fortyfourth* year stamped it with his own signet ring and gave it unto the Traividyas.

At that time it is reported that a miracle happened. The water that flowed through the holy spot shone like gold or silver, O descendant of Bharata. This holy water yielded satisfaction unto the Devas, sages and Manes. This occurred in the presence of Sūrya, the progenitor of his own family.

On seeing that great miracle, Rāma worshipped Viṣṇu and got the charitable deed of authority written by experts in writing.

21-25. On seeing this, all the Brāhmaṇas will cease to experience the fear of the worldly existence. Hence it is the protector of all.

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* This shows that it was issued two years after his coronation, when he came there with Sītā and the retinue. Sītā was not then abandoned.

In order to warn those sinners of bad conduct and those who are engaged in injuring and being perfidious to friends, he made this announcement formerly. O Nārada, these words, it is reported, were inscribed by expert scribes of Rāma in the copper plate:

"Pitṛs and Pitāmahas slap their arms and say, 'a person bequeathing land has been born in our family, who will cause our redemption.' This earth has been enjoyed by many kings in many ways. The benefit derived by them is only as long as they rule it.

26. A bequeather of plots of lands remains in heaven for sixty thousand years. Those who unlawfully seize it or abet that crime, shall go to or remain in hell for the same period.

27. On being tormented by tongs and pincers, beaten with pestles and fettered with nooses, he cries out very loudly.

28. Struck on the head by sticks, compelled to embrace fire and cut down to pieces with knives, he cries out with loud report.

29. Those who usurp the means of livelihood of Brāhmaṇas, are tortured thus by great wicked hosts of terrible servants of Yama.

30. Thereafter everyone of them takes birth as a brute, Rākṣasa or a dog, a python, a jackal or a vampire instilling fear in the minds of all living beings.

31. (*Verse slightly defective*) How does a person who illegally takes away even an inch of land, not commit a sin? (He is a perpetrator of sin.) How does a person who bequeathes even an inch of land, not perform a meritorious deed?

32. The donor of plots of lands attains the fruit of thousands of horse-sacrifices, a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices and the gifting of a hundred virgins.

33. The length of life, renown, happiness, intellect, piety, grain stock, wealth, victory and progeny increase day by day, of a donor of plots of lands and he enjoys.

34. Those wicked men who unlawfully usurp even an inch of land and those who take away inherited property (of others) are reborn as black serpents in barren, waterless forests. They live in dry hollows of trees.

35. A man who illegally seizes plots of land can become free from the sin by digging a thousand lakes, performing a hundred horse-sacrifices or by gifting ten million cows.

36. Which sensible good person will take back what has been liberally donated to Brāhmaṇas, the monetary gifts conducive to

righteousness, wealth and fame?

37. In this world of living beings, with all worldly happiness and as insignificant as a blade of grass, and fickle like the graceful movement of the leaves of an Aśvattha tree, if anyone of over-greedy nature takes away the letter of authority granted to the Brāhmaṇas, it amounts to being over-eager to fall into the dense whirlpool of hell.

38. Those kings who acquire this earth and those who depart after enjoying it, have not been followed by the earth. The earth will not accompany anyone. Whatever there is in the world is transitory. Fame alone is permanent. The good reputation of those by whom the earth is helped should not be ignored.

39-42. The earth granted to the Brāhmaṇas is the sole sister of all kings. No tax is to be levied thereupon.* It should not be enjoyed as their own possession.

After giving away the plots of lands, Rāmacandra requests all the eminent kings again and again. 'This bridge of righteousness is for all. In your own respective period of rule, this has to be observed by you all the kings. If any king is born in this family anywhere on the earth, I am beholden to him if what is given by me is preserved.' "

After getting the deed of authority inscribed, the intelligent Rāma worshipped excellent Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the four Vedas and handed it over to them in the presence of Vasiṣṭha.

43-45. At the bidding of Rāma, the Brāhmaṇas accepted the auspicious copper-plate of the deed embossed with golden letters for the purpose of worship. The deed was conducive to and an ornament of Dharma (righteousness). They preserved it out of devotion and with the object of getting desired objects.

Those Brāhmaṇas everyday worshipped that auspicious copper-plate with (application of) sandalpaste, fragrant heavenly flowers and with gold flowers or silver flowers.

46-47. They kept a seven-wicked lamp in front of it filled with pure ghee. They offered *Arghya,* O king. The excellent Brāhmaṇas offered foodstuffs everyday with devotion repeating the Mantra '*Rāma Rāmeti Rāmeti*'

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* The pun on *Kara* 'a hand'. 'She (being a sister) should not be grasped by hand.'

48. One should utter this *Rāma Mantra* (before) taking food, (before) going to bed, at the time of drinking, when starting on a journey (and even) while resting. The *Rāma Mantra* should be recited in prosperity as well as in misery.

49. He will never have misery or misfortune nor fear from mental anguish and bodily ailments. Day by day his life expectation, prosperity and power get increased.

50. By repeating the name of *Rāma* one gets released from even horrible sins. The devotee does not go to hell. He attains the eternal goal (of absolution).

Vyāsa said:

51-52. After doing thus, Rāma considered himself as one who had fulfilled his duty. After circumambulating and bowing to the many Brāhmaṇas and offering varieties of gifts including cows, horses, buffaloes and chariots, he spoke these words to them as well as to his own people:

53-58. "All of you stay here itself as long as the moon and the sun shine, as long as Meru stands on the earth and the seven seas exist. Undoubtedly all of you should stay here itself. O Brāhmaṇas, if kings or merchants deluded by the Māyā of their haughtiness do not carry out my behest or those people do not honour it, then, O Brāhmaṇas, let the Son of the Wind-god be remembered. The instant he is remembered Hanumān will come and reduce them to ash at my behest. It is undoubtedly the truth.

If any king abides by this splendid deed of authority, the Son of the Wind-god will always grant him happiness and prosperity. He will grant him sons and grandsons and chaste wife, glory and victory."

59-60. After saying thus and having instructed Hanumān too, Lord Rāma returned along with his army and retinue.

His auspicious arrival was announced by the sounds of musical instruments. He had his white umbrella raised aloft and was fanned by the people with chowries. After entering the city of Ayodhyā, he governed the kingdom for a long time.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Ruins of Dharmāraṇya Repaired

Nārada said:

1-3a. O revered Sir, O Lord of the lords of Devas, O creator and annihilator of worlds, what did Raghunātha who transcends the Guṇas though endowed with them, and who is the highest means of achieving salvation, do after establishing duly the Vedabhavana and excellent Brāhmaṇas? What rites did the Brāhmaṇas perform in their own abodes when Raghunātha went to Ayodhyā?

Brahmā said:

3b-8. (The Brāhmaṇas) were engaged in *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* rites. They were quiescent. They desisted from taking monetary gifts. The excellent Brāhmaṇas ruled the forest. To Rāma the chief priest narrated the greatness of the holy place, the greatness of Prayāga, the excellent benefit from Triveṇī, the greatness of the sacred place at Prayāga and that of Śuklatīrtha, the greatness of Siddhikṣetra, that of Kāśī as well as of Gaṅgā. O Nārada, all these were described by Vasiṣṭha. So also the greatness of other Tīrthas. The benefit of bath and monetary gifts and similar rites performed at Suvarṇā in Dharmāraṇya and Hari Kṣetra, a bit better than that of those performed at Vārāṇasī, was also narrated.

On hearing thus, Lord Rāma was highly delighted in the mind. Desirous of taking a pilgrimage once again he came there.

9-10. Accompanied by Sītā, with his brother Lakṣmaṇa assisted by Bharata and a large army in front, followed by Śatrughna, Rāma, the noble-minded one, the knower of Dharma, went to the city of Moheraka.* After going there he asked Vasiṣṭha:

Rāma enquired:

11-13. What (rite) should be performed in the great holy place Dharmāraṇya, O excellent Brāhmaṇa? Is it gifting away things,

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* Moharapura, 14 miles to the north of Vindhyācala (town) in the district of Mirzapur—De 56.

observances of vows, holy ablution or penance that is the best? Is it meditation or sacrifice or Homa or Japa that is the best, or is it best to gift away things or observances of vows, holy ablution or penance? By performing any of these in this holy place, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, one gets released from Brāhmaṇa-slaughter and other sins. Kindly tell me how it (takes place).

Vasiṣṭha said:

14-18. O blessed one, perform an excellent Yajña in Dharmāraṇya everyday for a hundred years.* It will give ten million times the merit.

On hearing it from his preceptor, he began the Yajña on a large scale. On that occasion, Sītā joyously intimated to him: "O dear lord, formerly some Brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas had been selected by you; those Brāhmaṇas were created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa and they have been staying in Dharmāraṇya since Kṛta and Tretā Yugas. Call them only and the sacrifice can be performed the better through them."

On hearing it, Lord Rāma invited the Brāhmaṇas then and, as before, they were established in this city of Moheraka.

19. He got the Yajña performed duly by means of those *Mehi* Brāhmaṇas numbering eighteen. They were Traividyas of great intellect.

20-21. They were Kuśika, Kauśika, Vatsa, Upamanyu, Kāśyapa, Kṛṣṇātreya, Bharadvāja, Dhāriṇa, the senior excellent Śaunaka, Māṇḍavya, Bhārgava, Paiṅgya, Vātsya, Laugākṣa, Gāṅgāyana, Gāṅgeya, Śunaka and Śaunaka.

Brahmā said:

22. King Rāma concluded the sacrifice through these Brāhmaṇas duly. After honouring the Brāhmaṇas devoutly, Rāma performed the *Avabhṛtha* (holy valedictory bath).

23-24a. At the conclusion of the Yajña, Rāma was requested by

* No mention in VR. This is the glorification of Dharmāraṇya.

Sītā modestly: "O virtuous one, at the conclusion of this sacrifice give the sacrificial fee, and a city after my name may be immediately founded."

24b. On hearing the words of Sītā, the excellent king did so accordingly.

25. For pleasing Sītā, a danger-free place was given to those Brāhmaṇas by King Rāma.

26. He named it *Sītāpura*[1] and the name became well-known. Śāntā and Sumaṅgalā are the two deities presiding over it.

27. Getting up and extremely delighted, he granted to learned Brāhmaṇas twelve villages in front of Moheraka.

28-30. He went to another holy place on the banks of River Kāśyapī. Some Brāhmaṇas who knew Dharma were brought by Rāma.

Immediately he went to Dharmālaya, O sage, where formerly a very great penance was performed by Dharma, wearing garlands and holding a water-pot.

Ever since that time, the place is well-known as Dharmālaya. The son of Daśaratha gave sixteen great gifts (*Mahādānas*) there.

31-32. Fifty villages including Sītāpura extending up to Satyamandira were given to the Brāhmaṇas for the prosperity of his own family at the instance of Sītā and at the behest of his preceptor.

33-36. The Brāhmaṇa families consisted of eighteen thousand Brāhmaṇas including Vātsyāyana, Upamanyu, Jātūkarṇya, Piṅgala, Bhāradvāja, Vatsa, Kauśika, Kuśa, Śāṇḍilya, Kāśyapa, Gautama, Chāndhana, Kṛṣṇātreya, Vatsa, Vasiṣṭha, Dhāraṇa, Bhāṇḍila, Yauvanāśva, Kṛṣṇāyana, Upamanyu (a repetition), Gārgya, Mudgala, Maukhaka, Puśi, Parāśara and Kauṇḍinya.

37-44. The names of the fifty-five villages* are given in due order[2]: Śītāpura, Śrīkṣetra, Muśalī, Mudgalī, Jyeṣṭhalā, Śreyasthāna,

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1. This city said to have been founded by Rāma on the bank of River Kāśyapī is probably the same as modern Sitapur in U.P. as the villages given by Rāma are round about Sitapur.

* The editor of the Veṅkaṭeśa Press edition notes that some names of the villages are 'Aśudha' incorrect? For their identification see Note.

2. Some villages can be located as follows: Dugdhāvalī (Dudhauli), some 3 miles from Pisawan, Sitapur District; Gandhavatī (It should be 'Gandhavalī') corresponding to modern Gandhuli in the Sindhauli sub-division of Sitapur District; Dantāli (Dateli) 10 miles from Hargaon. Further research for identification is desirable.

Dantālī, Vaṭapatrakā, Rājñaḥpuram (Rājapura), Kṛṣṇavāṭa, Deha, Loha, Canasthana, Koheca, Candanakṣetra, Thala, Hastināpura, Karpaṭa, Kannajahnavī, Vanoḍahanaphāvalī (?), Mohodha, Śamohoralī (?), Govindaṇa, Thalatyaja, Cāraṇasiddha, Sodgītrābhājyaja, Vaṭamālikā, Godhara, Māraṇaja, Mātramadhya, Mātara, Balavatī, Gandhavatī, Īāmlī (?), Rājyaja, Rupāvalī, Bahudhana, Chatrīṭa, Vaṁśaja, Jāyāsamraṇa, Gotikī, Citralekha, Dugdhāvalī, Haṁsāvalī, Vaihola, Caillaja, Nālāvalī, Āsāvalī and Suhālī.

These fifty-five villages were founded by Rāma himself and donated to those Brāhmaṇas.

45-46. In order to attend on them, Rāma made arrangements for thirty-six thousand Vaiśyas and Śūdras four times them in number.

Gifts of cows, horses and clothes, gold, silver and copper were made to them with great faith and joy.

Nārada said:

47. Those Brāhmaṇas, the masters of the Vedas, were eighteen thousand in number. How did they share the villages, the wealth produced in the villages, clothes etc. and the ornaments etc.? O virtuous one, narrate that unto me.

Brahmā said:

48. At the end of the sacrifice, the sacrificial fee was accepted by all Ṛtviks. Everything such as the great gifts (*Mahādāna*) etc. was offered to them only.

49. The common villages and the great holy places were allotted to those people who used to stay there.

50. At the instance of Vasiṣṭha, the villages were allotted to the Brāhmaṇas by the brave scion of the Raghu family, so that Brāhmaṇas (resident therein) were not banished (from their residence).

51. Grain was indeed given to the Brāhmaṇas and unlimited quantity of wealth was also donated. Thereafter Rāma spoke to Brāhmaṇas with joined palms:

52-55. "Undoubtedly in my kingdom, all of you should conduct yourselves like the Brāhmaṇas of Kṛtayuga and Tretāyuga of olden days. Whatever you require—money, foodgrains, vehicle, clothes, jewels, gold etc. and wealth in the form of golden jewellery, copper, silver etc., you may freely request me. Now and afterwards

you make the request in the fitting way. You can always send an oral message, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. Whatever desire you express, I shall fulfil it, O lords."

56-59. Thereafter Rāma addressed courteously the servants etc.: "The orders of the Brāhmaṇas should not be transgressed. They are to be carefully carried out. Whatever they request for comply with it immediately. He who serves the Brāhmaṇas after bowing down to them, that Śūdra attains heaven. He shall attain wealth and sons. Otherwise he will undoubtedly remain poor. A barbarous man or an unclean Mleccha or Daitya or Rākṣasa, whoever brings in obstacles shall be reduced to ash instantly."

60. Then the extremely delighted Rāma circumambulated the Brāhmaṇas. As he was about to start, he was greeted by the Brāhmaṇas with blessings.

61. All the Brāhmaṇas followed them up to the borderline. All of them with their eyes full of affection returned to Dharmāraṇya and were bewildered. They fainted after reaching Dharmāraṇya.

62-65. After doing everythings thus, Rāma started towards his own city. Kāśyapas and Gargas of firm observances felt satisfied that they had done their duty. Accompanied by their wives, friends and sons, they were seated in the honoured seat of the preceptors.

Rāma reached the excellent city of Ayodhyā. On seeing Rāma, all the people became joyous. Then Rāma, the pious-souled one, desirous of protecting the subjects, ruled the kingdom. The virtuous, wise Rāma made Jānakī pregnant for the continuation of the line of the Sun.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Hanumān Makes His Appearance

Nārada said:

1-2. Kindly tell me, O virtuous one, what happened thereafter. At the outset, O excellent speaker, narrate it in full. How long did that holy place remain stable? By whom was it being protected? Whose sway reigned supreme there, O lord.

Brahmā said:

3-5. From Tretā till the end of Dvāpara up to the advent of Kali, the son of the Wind-god, Hanumān, was capable of protecting it single-handed. O son, it was not possible for anyone other than Hanumān by whom Laṅkā was destroyed and powerful Rākṣasas were killed. (Now) he alone is the protector at the order of Rāma, dear son. There is the sway of Brāhmaṇa and Śrīmātā.

6-8. Day by day the delight of people staying there increased. The Brāhmaṇas used to recite Ṛk, Yajus and Sāma Vedas. They recited loudly Atharva Veda also day and night. The sound emanating from the Vedic chant filled the three worlds including mobile and immobile beings. There were festivities in every village and city. Different kinds of Yajñas based on various religious rituals continued.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

9. Did any destruction to the holy place occur at any time or not? Was the place overrun by Daityas or wicked Rākṣasas?

Vyāsa said:

10. O king, you have asked pertinently. You are always pure and a knower of Dharma. Listen to what happened in the beginning of Kali Age.[1]

11. For the sake of the welfare, satisfaction and happiness of

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1. The Purāṇa-writer is not aware that Yudhiṣṭhira and Pāṇḍavas abdicated their kingdom as soon as the Kali Age began on the same day as Kṛṣṇa's death in 3402 B.C.

all the worlds, I shall describe a special Yajña. O king, listen to everything.

12-13. Now, when the advent of Kali Age was imminent, at the end of Dvāpara, when Kali had not yet started, there was a king named Āma who became the ruler of Kānyakubja.[1] He was glorious, a knower of Dharma, calm, self-controlled, eager to maintain justice, of good conduct and devoted to truth and piety, O excellent king.

14-15. Due to their acute fear of unrighteousness, thanks to special attack of Kali Age, all the Devas abandoned their respective places on the earth and resorted to Naimiṣa forest. Rāma too accomplished the construction of the bridge with due assistance, O king.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

16. Of what nature is the fear all over the world when Kali arrived that it became very difficult to overcome and the earth (possessing jewels in her womb) was abandoned by Suras?

Vyāsa said:

17-19. Listen to the salient features of Kali Age that will become manifest,[2] O king.

The people will be speakers of falsehood. They will be engaged in slandering good people. All of them will be given to robber-like activities. They will be devoid of devotion to their parents. They will be sexually inclined to the wives of their kinsmen. Their thinking will be full of lustfulness. They will hate Brāhmaṇas. All of them will be against one another. In Kali Age the people will be the destroyers (exploiters) of those who seek refuge in them.

20-21. Brāhmaṇas will take up the activity of Vaiśyas: they swerve from the path of the Vedas; they are haughty. When Kali arrives, the Brāhmaṇas will cease to perform Sandhyā prayers.

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1. This is a glaring anachronism. Jaina works like *Prabandha Kośa* refer to King Āma, the disciple of Bappa-Bhaṭṭi. Āma who embraced Jainism died in CE 832 (VS 890). Yudhiṣṭhira who abdicated his throne at the beginning of Kali Age, is shown posterior to Āma. The reference is useful to determine the date of this part of SkP i.e. post 9th Cent. CE.

2. VV 17-33 describe the effect of Kali Age on the people. This description is common to other Purāṇas also.

When there is peace, they behave (as if they are) brave; when there is danger, they become dejected. They neglect *Śrāddhas* and *Tarpaṇas*. Indulging in demoniac conduct, they are bereft of devotion to Viṣṇu.

22-25. The people are greedy of other people's wealth. They engage in taking bribes. The Brāhmaṇas take food without taking bath. The Kṣatriyas avoid war. When Kali arrives, all people become dirty and wicked in their conduct. All become addicted to drinking liquor. The priests perform Yajñas on behalf of those who are not eligible for such performance. Women hate husbands; sons hate their parents. In Kali Age, all silly people will become haters of their own brethren. Eager to amass wealth, Brāhmaṇas will become sellers of milk products. When Kali Age has actually arrived, cows do not yield milk.

26-29. Trees will not bear fruits at any time, O descendant of Bharata. In Kali Age, people will become sellers of their daughters, of cows and goats, of poisons, liquor and even of the Vedas. A woman conceives after eleven years. All the people desist from fasting on the eleventh day in a lunar fortnight. Brāhmaṇas will not take to pilgrimages. They will eat too much; they will sleep a lot.

30-33. All will be engaged in fraudulent activities, hating even the Vedas and recluses. They will cheat one another. In Kali Age, there will not be the fear of contact (with indecent fellows). Kṣatriyas will be stripped of their kingdom and Mlecchas will become kings. All will become breachers of trust and all are engaged in troubling the elders. O king, they will be treacherous friends and will indulge in gluttony and sex. All the four castes will mix up into one caste when Kali has arrived, O great king. My words can never be otherwise.

34-38. On hearing this straight from his preceptor, the powerful ruler of Kānyakubja named Āma continued to rule the kingdom. He became an emperor and was keen in protecting the subjects. Due to the advent of Kali, the subjects became inclined to commit sins. Incited by Kṣapaṇas* (Buddhist mendicants) and following

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*The author makes a confusion between Jainism and Buddhism. The footnote in the text here interprets 'Kṣapaṇaka' as 'a Buddhist mendicant' but later on the author corrects himself and uses the word 'Kṣapaṇaka' in the sense of a Jaina mendicant.

their instructions, the subjects gave up their Vaiṣṇava cult and adopted the Buddhist[1] way of life.

The seniormost queen of that king well-known by the name of Māmā and possessing all good features conceived. When the tenth month was complete, a daughter endowed with all beautiful features and a face resembling the full moon was born.

39-45. She was known by the name Ratnagaṅgā. She used to be bedecked in gems. Once by chance a mendicant named Indrasūri came to the kingdom of Kānyakubja. The said girl of sixteen years, the princess not yet initiated into the religious cult, was secretly taken to Indrasūri by a maid servant.

O descendant of Bharata, he initiated her into the Śābarī Mantra Vidyā. Fascinated by the activity of the trident-bearing mendicant, she attended to it with concentration. Then she became fascinated all the more and eagerly grasped (followed) each and every statement. Instructed by the Kṣapaṇas, O dear one, she became one devoted to Jaina cult. The king of great exploits gave Princess Ratnagaṅgā to the intelligent Kumbhīpāla, the lord of Brahmāvarta. Deluded by fate, the king gave Moheraka to him (the son-in-law) at the time of the marriage. He came to Dharmāraṇya and established his capital. He duly installed the gods mentioned in the Jaina cult.[2]

46-52. All the different castes were converted to Jaina cult. Brāhmaṇas were not honoured. No religious rites like *Śāntika* and *Pauṣṭika* were performed. No one ever used to perform charity. Time passed like this.

The Brāhmaṇas, the original ones who had the edict of authority, were deprived of their possession. They were worried in the mind day and night. They came to the brave king Āma stationed in Kānyakubja, who was surrounded by heretics. After arriving at the city of Kānyakubja, O king, they stayed for a few days on the banks of Gaṅgā. Those Moḍha Brāhmaṇas became tired. The king was informed by spies and they were brought to his presence. The Brāhmaṇas who were summoned in the morning came to the royal assembly. The king did not respectfully receive them or bow to

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1. The author confuses Buddhism with Jainism. Kṣapaṇakas are Jaina monks.
2. There is some historical basis to this legend, but the confusion between Kumbhīpāla and Kumārapāla in the text and the confusion between Yaśovarman and Yaśodharman in Jaina works make this chapter a suspect—probably an interpolation in the ninth cent. CE.

them. Even as the Brāhmaṇas were standing, he asked all of them, "O Brāhmaṇas, tell (it now) why you have come. What is the matter?"

The Brāhmaṇas said:

53-55. O king, we have come here from Dharmāraṇya to you. (It is) your son-in-law Kumārapālaka (Kumbhīpāla in v 43) by whom the edict of authority of the Brāhmaṇas, which was wonderful, has been destroyed. He has done so, because he follows the Jaina cult and has been instigated by Indrasūri.

The king said:

By whom have you been established in the city of Moheraka? O Brāhmaṇas, report everything correctly.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

56-62. At the outset, we were established by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. In the splendid place here, a city was founded by the intelligent Dharmarāja and Rāma thereafter. On seeing the Royal Charter issued by Rāmacandra, it was duly honoured by the other kings, O excellent king. Now your son-in-law does not protect the Brāhmaṇas.

On hearing the words of the Brāhmaṇas, the king spoke to them: "You all may go quickly and at my behest say to King Kumarapāla: Return the settlement of the Brāhmaṇas to them."

On hearing those words, the Brāhmaṇas were highly delighted. With great delight they went and told these words to the king.

Kumarapāla said:

O Brāhmaṇas, I shall not abide by and honour the Royal Charter issued by Rāma. I disown the Brāhmaṇas who indulge in violence and kill animals in Yajña. There is no question of my having any respect for and devotion to these killers.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

63. O excellent king, how is it that you have destroyed the charter (copper-plate edict)? Please abide by it. Do not be inclined towards sin.

The king said:

64-68. Non-violence is the greatest virtue. Non-violence is the greatest penance. Non-violence is the greatest wisdom. Non-violence is the highest fruit. The inner souls are alike, O Brāhmaṇas, in grass, in trees, birds, men, worms, bugs etc., horses and goats, elephants, spiders, snakes and buffaloes. All creatures, whether small or great, are similar. How is it that you indulge in violence?

On hearing those thunderbolt-like words the Brāhmaṇas became furious. Their eyes reddened. The excellent Brāhmaṇas replied:

The Brāhmaṇas said:

69-73. What is said by you is true. Non-violence is surely the greatest virtue. But still greater virtue is there. Listen with concentration of mind.

The violence sanctioned by the Vedas is no violence.[1] That is the final verdict. When the animals are struck with a weapon and they are made to suffer pain, there is sin involved and this alone is *Adharma*, O superior one among the knowers of Dharma. Animals are killed only with the recitation of Vedic Mantras without the use of weapons. That violence is not the one that causes pain to the animal; that violence is pleasant. Helping other is conducive to merit and harassing others leads to sin. One is not defiled by sins even after committing the violence sanctioned by the Vedas.

On hearing the words of the Brāhmaṇas the king said again:

The king said:

74-78. The excellent Dharmāraṇya is the holiest spot of Brahmā and others. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others do not exist today. Nor is there Dharma. The said Rāma was a mere man. Where is that long-tailed one, who was entrusted with your protection? The charter of authority of yours is never seen; nor will I honour it (even if produced).

Then the Brāhmaṇas who became infuriated replied:

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1. This is the defence of Mīmāṁsakas about violence in sacrifice (*yajñīyā hiṁsā*).

The Brāhmaṇas said:

O fool, how do your speak thus at the height of your arrogance? The Four-armed Lord himself incarnated on the earth as a man for the destruction of Daityas and protection of Dharma. He is the refuge to those who are helpless. He is devoted to Dharma, compassionate and sympathetic, the protector of living beings.

The king said:

79-81. Where is Rāma today? Where is the son of the Wind-god? All of them are like clouds which have disappeared. Where is Rāma? Where is Hanumān? If Rāma or Hanumān were to exist around, I believe he would have come to help the Brāhmaṇas by this time. Show me Hanumān, Rāma or Lakṣmaṇa. If there is evidence, O Brāhmaṇas, let it be shown.

82-85. They said: "After making the son of Añjanā his messenger, Lord Rāma gave more than four thousand four hundred villages, O king. Coming again to this place he gave thirteen villages.

At Kāśyapī and Gaṅgā, he made sixteen great gifts to the chiefs of the Brāhmaṇas. Splendid villages were given. Again, O heroic one, he had the *Saṁkalpa* (mental decision) of donating fifty-six (more). Excellent Gobhūjas(?) numbering thirty-six thousand were born. One hundred and twenty-five thousand merchants were given the title *Māṇḍalīka*."

86-90. He said: "O Brāhmaṇas, show the son of the Wind-god. Merely on coming to know him, I shall give back the previous status. If the proof is shown, I shall carry out the words of the Brāhmaṇas. Then all of us will become followers of the Vedic cult. If not, you all adopt the Jaina cult."

On hearing the words of the king all of them came back to their respective places. The Brāhmaṇas were dejected in their minds. They were rendered blind with fury. Exhaling heavy breaths and heaving sighs, they shouted Hā! Hā! They gnashed their teeth and pressed the hands together. They told one another: "What shall we do hereafter?"

91-99. All of them assembled together and discussed. Brooding over Rāma's statement (in their minds) and meditating on the son of Añjanā, they convened a great congregation of Brāhmaṇas including

children and old people. The oldest Brāhmaṇa among them made this splendid statement: "We have seventy-two groups belonging to sixty-four Gotras. The Avaṭaṅka of each Gotra is the representative of a village. Let one intelligent Brāhmaṇa of one Varga join this group. All of them shall go to Rāmeśvara Setubandha. Hanumān is present there.

May all who are free from illness go to Rāma. Eschewing food, controlling anger, devoid of deceptive tricks, may all of them eulogize, meditate and repeat the names of Rāma. Then Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, will have pity on the Brāhmaṇas. He will give a letter of authority that can never be violated even in Yuga after Yuga. Pleased with our great penance, he will grant what we desire.

If any Brāhmaṇa representing a Varga refuses to go there, he shall be excommunicated from that Varga and certainly divested of the rights of his position. He will not have anything to do with the business affairs, marriage rite, collective activities of the village. He will be excluded from all places."

100-109. On hearing that announcement in the assembly, a pure Brāhmaṇa among them who was eloquent, efficient and good-voiced, proclaimed to the Brāhmaṇas repeating each statement three times. Clapping the hands at every statement he said: "If anyone is disinclined to go, he will incur the sin of those who utter falsehood, those who slander others, of a man who ravishes other men's wives, who is engaged in harassing others, of those who imbibe liquor and are thieves of gold. Why make too much talk, O Brāhmaṇas? Let all excellent Brāhmaṇas go on." On hearing that terrible utterance they decided to go.

On hearing that the Brāhmaṇas were going, King Kumārapālaka called them and said: "The agricultural products and what is got by means of alms, I will certainly send to the Brāhmaṇas of the different Gotras."

On hearing that, all became sad. "What shall happen after this?" Three thousand Brāhmaṇas decided then: "There is no doubt, we shall go to Rāma." This was attested by signatures of the Brāhmaṇas. With joined palms the Brāhmaṇas spoke thus: "The knowledge of Trayī is destroyed here. The presiding deities of the three Vedas have been made angry. Hence all the eighteen thousand should go there."

Thereupon, the excellent king called all those Gobhuja mer-

chants and said, "Stop those Brāhmaṇas."

Vyāsa said:

110-113. Those chief Vaṇiks called *Gobhujas* who were not much attached to the Jaina cult, kept quiet because they were afraid of the loss of their means of livelihood. "How can we stop those Brāhmaṇas who are veritable fire(-gods)? The Brāhmaṇas burn by means of the fire of curse, O king; these Brāhmaṇas are deadly."

The king then called those Śūdras who were born in Aḍālaya and ordered, "May the Brāhmaṇas intending to emigrate be prevented." Among them (Śūdras) a few were adherents of Jaina cult. At the behest of the king, they went to the Brāhmaṇa-colony for preventing them.

Some of the Śūdras said:

114. Where is Rāma accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa? Where is the mighty son of the Wind-god? O excellent Brāhmaṇas, speak of the present time.

115. Why do you go through the impassable forests infested by tigers, lions and wild elephants? You are risking your life. You are forsaking your sons, wives and homes.

116. Why do you go to a kingdom of wicked administration?

On hearing these words, some of the Brāhmaṇas thought to themselves.

117. Afraid of the great king and tempted by the gifts indicated, those fifteen thousand Brāhmaṇas said, "May everything be so."

118-121. "Sometimes we shall carry on cultivation with needed implements. Or we shall beg for alms." Then those fifteen thousand excellent Brāhmaṇas made a terrible statement: "Let the others go. Let the charter of authority issued by Rāma certainly be yours."

All those prominent Brāhmaṇas were well-known as *Traividya*. Only three thousand became (real) Traividyas ('Masters of the three Vedas').

The king said:

122-128. A fourth of the kingdom is given as (donation of) the

plot of land. Henceforth the kinship shall be therefore mutually in four ways(?). Cyavana will give his daughter. You accept the girl, (otherwise) you will lose your avocation and will never have mutual kinship.

On hearing these words, the Brāhmaṇas of Trayīvidya section went to their respective places without backing out from the stipulated resolution [of meeting (?)]. Fifteen thousand leading Brāhmaṇas, the excellent Brāhmaṇas called Cāturvidyas, went away.

The three thousand spent that day with their minds worried with thoughts. They were being dissuaded by their humble sons and wives (from their resolve). With their mind concentrated on one point (viz. departure), they did not get sleep. They got up at the early dawn (in Brāhma Muhūrta). They shook off the shackles of worldly attachment; abandoned their dear sons, wives and abodes. All those leading Brāhmaṇas met together at the outskirts of the village.

129-133. All the three thousand performed their daily rites, gave monetary gifts to Brāhmaṇas and worshipped the Kula Mātā (the family deity).

Gaṇanāyaka stationed at the southern gate was worshipped with *Sindūra* and garlands of flowers for the purpose of the destruction of all obstacles.

Bakula Svāmī, the Sun-god, who enables (devotees) to attain all objects was honoured. So also Śrīmātā of great power was respectfully worshipped. They worshipped Śāntā and bowed to Jñānajā, the mother of the Gotra. Intent on going they attained great delight. The Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas inviting them again, asked them about their return.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

134-140. Either you do not go or after going return quickly so that what is given by Rāma will be helpful ere long.

On hearing it, the excellent Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas said again: "Neither for the sake of this place nor for the Brāhmaṇas nor for livelihood will we return. This should not be told to us again. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, livelihood was accorded to us by the eminent scion of Raghu's family. We are proceeding towards (getting back) that livelihood by means of *Japa*, *Homa* and *Arcanā*."

Those fifteen thousand said to them again respectfully: "We must stay here with devotion for serving the Fire-god. You must go there for the sake of the accomplishment of the task of all. Certainly we shall render all mutual help. If you do not keep up your word, you will be devoid of livelihood." Thereupon from among them, a Cāturvidya spoke.

The Cāturvidya said:

141-147. O Brāhmaṇas, at the outset it was Rāma who gave the livelihood to us. The Cāturvidyas are of noble qualities. They preserve their pious rites.

They are created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva as persons with the duty of performing Yajñas and study of Vedas.

After giving the gift, Rāma said to you that you should not go away abandoning this place. This is the condition laid down. At a time of great danger, the mighty son of the Wind-god should be remembered.

With this stipulation, you have been established in your place. How can one go away by thus transgressing the instruction of Rāma? Hence we tell you even as you are going for the sake of accomplishing your tasks. (We shall also endeavour) for the fulfilment of your task by means of *Homa, Arcanā* etc. Your task will be accomplished. It is true. It is true. There is no doubt about it.

On hearing these words those Brāhmaṇas diverted their attention to the journey. Then the three thousand excellent Brāhmaṇas started from that place.

148-154. Traversing country after country, forest after forest, performing Śrāddhas at every holy place, propitiating the ancestors, meditating on Rāma and Hanumān, taking food only once a day, the Brāhmaṇas of good conduct went slowly.

The Brāhmaṇas who were calm, devoted to the vow of truthfulness and refused monetary gift, went a long way seeking the vision of Hanumān.

They offered Sandhyā prayers three times a day with concentrated minds. As they were proceeding thus, auspicious omens occurred (yet) while they were going their bundle of viaticum (provision of food etc. for the journey) fell short. They became exhausted and faced fatigue. Taking the great path, after walking a short distance, they became unable to proceed even a step.

But resolving firmly within their mind, emboldening themselves, with the determination, 'Without seeing Hanumān we will not go back home', the Traividyas proceeded to the place of the Monkey Lord and Rāmeśvara.

155-160. Devoted to truth, steadfast in their vows, having only bulbous roots and fruits for food, they meditated on Rāma and Hanumanta. After taking up the vow, abandoning food and water, they went along distressed with thirst and hunger, but devoutly adhering to their vow.

Even as the Brāhmaṇas were undergoing great distress, Rāma, the receptacle of devotion, became distressed in mind and spoke to Hanumān: "O son of the Wind-god, O knower of Dharma, hasten for the sake of the Brāhmaṇas. The inhabitants of Dharmāraṇya are distressed. My mind is burning now. I do not have any peace. The person causing misery to the Brāhmaṇas should be chastised. There is no doubt about it. O monkey, I am rendered miserable by those people who cause misery to the Brāhmaṇas."

161-163. On hearing his words, the Lord of Monkeys bowed down to Rāma. He was overwhelmed with great sympathy. In the guise of an old Brāhmaṇa, the Lord of Monkeys appeared before the Brāhmaṇas for the sake of testing them. He joined his palms with great devotion to the Brāhmaṇas feeble with fatigue. Pouring water through Kamaṇḍalu, he received and paid obeisance to all and spoke these words:

Hanumān enquired:

164. Whence have you come here? Where are you desirous of going? For what purpose are you traversing the terrible forest?

The Brāhmaṇas replied:

165-166a. We are Brāhmaṇas who have come from Dharmāraṇya for the sake of the vision (and audience) of Rāma and to represent our distress. We are desirous of going to the great holy place Setubandha that accords all desires. Due to the strict observance, we have become emaciated in body. We are eager to see Rāma where the Monkey Lord, the son of the Wind-god, as well as Rāmeśvara is present.

166b-172. On hearing that, the Brāhmaṇa said: "Where is Rāma? Where is the son of the Wind-god? Where is Setubandha and

Rāmeśvara, O Brāhmaṇas? It is far, far off. The forest is infested by tigers and lions. It is vast and terrible. After going there, it is difficult to return. O blessed ones, if my word is to be carried out, all of you return. Or you may go. O Brāhmaṇas, live long. Be happy." On hearing the words of the old man, the Brāhmaṇas of single-minded resolve said:

"O Brāhmaṇa, all of us do (wish to) go to Rāma's presence. There is no doubt about it. If anyone of us dies on the way, he shall attain Rāma's world. If anyone (of us) survives, he will undoubtedly get livelihood from Rāma. There is no refuge unto us other than Rāghava."

173-176. After saying this, they set off eager to see Rāma. After spending the whole day when it dawned once again, Hanumān in the form of an old man endowed with all features as before was seen holding the Kamaṇḍalu and desirous of saluting.

He said:

From which place have you come here, all ye Brāhmaṇas? Is there some great profit expected? Or is there a festival of marriage?

On hearing these words of his, the Brāhmaṇas were extremely surprised. Duly bowing down, they made these respectful submissions:

177-184. "Our previous history is highly surprising. O Brāhmaṇa, as you appear to be a sympathetic person, listen.

At the outset, at the beginning of the creation of the world, we were established by the trinity of gods, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā. Thereafter, by repairing the ruins (of Dharmāraṇya and its shrines) we were established by Śrīrāma. The revenue of villages numbering four hundred and forty-four was given (to us) with due honour by the Lord of the Monkeys. For the sake of the worship, thirteen villages including Sītāpura were given.

Thirty-six thousand Vaṇiks were assigned the duty of maintaining the Brāhmaṇas. They are named Gobhūjas. The Śūdras were one hundred and twenty-five thousand.

They were of three classes, viz. Gobhūjas, Aḍālajas and Māṇḍalīkas. These were excellent ones. Crores of precious stones were given by him for the sake of their maintenance.

Then there were Moḍha (eighteen thousand), Gobhūjas (eighteen thousand), Māṇḍalīyas (hundred and twenty-five thousand) and Aḍālajas (eighteen thousand).

Now, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, a wicked king named Āma does not honour the charter issued by Rāmacandra.

185-189. His wicked son-in-law named Kumārapālaka (alias Kumbhīpāla) is always surrounded by heretics, in accordance with Kalidharma (the characteristics of Kali Age).

Instigated by the Jaina Indrasūtra (alias Indrasūri) following the cult of Buddha (?) he has certainly repealed the charter of authority issued by Rāma.

There were some Vaṇiks too like him with similar mentality. They disown Rāma and the noble-minded Hanumān.

'Without a proof, I will not give (the privileges granted)' (says he). On coming to know of this, these Brāhmaṇas have sought refuge in Rāma and the great heroic Hanumān, the protector of Rāma's charter (to us). Hence, O highly intelligent one, all of us approach Rāma.

190. If the son of Añjanā does not accord our desire, we will commit suicide with the vow of non-intake of food.

191. To you who asked, we have spoken in detail. Considering the feelings of affection reveal your avocation."

Hanumān said:

192. As the Kali Age has arrived, where can one get the divine vision, O Brāhmaṇas? Go back, O eminent Brāhmaṇas, if you desire great happiness.

193. It is impossible to enter the desolate forest infested by tigers and lions and wild elephants, and full of many forest fires.

The Brāhmaṇas replied:

194. The previous day, a Brāhmaṇa said this. Today you have come and speak the same.

195. Who are you? Rāma or the son of the Wind-god in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa? Have pity on us and tell us the truth, O lord, O great Brāhmaṇa.

196-197. Hanumān told them what was concealed from the Brāhmaṇas: "O Brāhmaṇas, I am Hanumān. Know me definitely

(to be so)." He revealed his form and showed his big tail.

Hanumān said:

198-203. This is the visible ocean (expanse of water), the beautiful Setubandha. This is Lord Rāmeśvara who stops appearing in the womb (i.e. gives *Mokṣa*).

This is the excellent city well-known by the name Laṅkā where Sītā, the destroyer of the grief of Rāma, was met by me.

At the point of the index finger, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, shines the great golden city of Laṅkā inaccessible to others except me. It was here that Vibhīṣaṇa was installed by Lord Rāma. This is that great city.

Multitudes of devout people observing vows have brought water from Gaṅgā during their pilgrimage and poured over Rāmeśa. Huge masses of these are seen in the great ocean. Thereby those devout people have become free from sins, because they were steadfast in their vows. Indeed prosperity comes up at the rise of merit and loss, when sin predominates.

204-205. Formerly Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas had been ousted from their positions. At the time of the repair of the ruins, they were re-established by Rāma.

In the previous birth, O Brāhmaṇas, worship of Hari was done by me. Now firm devotion is seen in the form of your service. Delighted by the power of the merit, I shall grant you the boon.

206-208. I am blessed. I have fulfilled my duties. I am fortunate on the earth. Today my birth is fruitful and the life is lived well since I have come near the feet of Brāhmaṇas.

Vyāsa said:

On seeing Hanumān their entire bodies thrilled with hair standing on their ends. With the words choked in the throat, those experts in speech spoke thus:

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Return of Moḍha Brāhmaṇas

Vyāsa said:

1-2. Then those Brāhmaṇas said to the son of the Wind-god: "Now our birth is fruitful and life is well spent. Now the houses, virtues (Dharma) of us, the Moḍha people, are blessed. The entire earth is blessed and so the many varied sacrificial rites.

3. Obeisance to the devotee of Śrīrāma, the slayer of Akṣa. Salute to the holder of thunderbolt who set fire to the city of the demons.

4. Hail to the saviour of Jānakī's heart, to the compassionate one, to the beloved one of Śrīrāma who got distressed due to the separation from Sītā!

5. Obeisance to you, the extremely heroic one. Protect us who are sunk in worldly affairs. Obeisance to you, the son of the Wind-god, who consider Brāhmaṇas as gods.

6. Salute to the devotee of Rāma, the one who works for the welfare of cows and Brāhmaṇas. Obeisance to you, the black-faced one, one in the form of Rudra.

7-8. Obeisance to you, the son of Añjanā, the remover of all ailments forever. Bow to you, the highly powerful one wearing serpents for the sacred thread. Obeisance to you, the one who crossed the ocean, the builder of the bridge."

Vyāsa said:

9. Delighted with this eulogy, the son of the Wind-god said: "O Brāhmaṇas, choose whatever boon appeals to your heart."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

10. If you are pleased, O chief of the Devas, O lord, the one who carries out Rāma's orders, show to us now your form assumed by you, O Hari, at (the time of the war in) Laṅkā.

11. So also slay now the king, the perpetrator of sins, the wicked Kumārapāla and, of course, Āma as well.

12. Let him obtain the fruit of depriving (us) of livelihood. As a proof, O mighty one, do so. Why delay, tell us.

13. That king may become meritorious with the mind directed

towards you. When the evidence is produced, O heroic one, he will keep the honour of the charter (granted by Rāma).

14. He will propagate Vedic cult all over the earth. O extremely heroic one, steedfast in piety, show us your form.

Hanumān said:

15. My form with its gigantic body cannot be the object of (ordinary) eyes in Kali Age. May the Brāhmaṇas understand that it is a mass of brilliance and divine.

16. Still, I am delighted with your great devotion, eulogy etc. I shall show my form covered with a cloth. See.

17-19a. On being told thus, the Brāhmaṇas who were eager to accomplish their task completely, then visualized Hanumān of divine form and features, having a huge body and a big tail.

Seeing Hanumān's divine form, they were astonished. But taking courage with difficulty, the Brāhmaṇas spoke slowly: "Everything is seen exactly as described in the Purāṇas."

19b-21. He spoke to them all, as they stood covering their eyes: "O prominent sages, take these fruits for eating. Eating these, O Brāhmaṇas, there shall be over-satiation. Even without Dharmāraṇya, your hunger shall certainly be satisfied."

Vyāsa said:

22. The fruits were eaten by the hungry Brāhmaṇas and they had the satisfaction of having imbibed divine nectar.

23. They had neither thirst nor hunger. The Brāhmaṇas who had been distressed in mind, became overwhelmed with surprise, O king.

24-25. Then the Son of Añjanā said: "O Brāhmaṇas, Kali Age having arrived, I will not come there leaving Śiva, Rāmeśvara. The token given by me may be taken there, when you go. The truth hereof will dawn on that king undoubtedly."

26-27. After saying thus, he lifted his arms and collected the hairs from both the arms separately. He then made two packets by covering them with Bhūrja leaves. These he placed under the armpits of a Brāhmaṇa, the packet containing the hairs from the left armpit under his left armpit and that containing the hairs from the right armpit under his right armpit.

28-35a. "This is the bestower of all desires to a devotee of Rāma and it brings destruction to others." He also said: "When the king says 'Present the credential token' the packet of the left armpit may be quickly handed over. Or throw down the packet at the doorway of the king's (palace). It will burn his army, palace, treasury etc. The queens, the princes and everything will be aflame. When the king is prepared to restore the means of livelihood, villages, the taxes of the Vaṇiks, nay, if he gives whatever was given before, O Brāhmaṇas, make him write up a final agreement. If he gives everything as before and bows down with joined palms, take everything completely as given by Rāma. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, let the packet under the right armpit be thrown. Then the army will be as before. Instantly the houses, the treasury, sons, grandsons etc. will be seen released by the fire."

35b-36. On hearing the nectar-like words uttered by Hanumān, the Brāhmaṇas felt elated with joy. They danced and sang. Some of them pronounced "Hail! and Victory!" laughing loudly with one another.

37-39. With the hairs on their bodies standing on ends, they eulogized again and again. Some enthusiastic ones caught hold of his tail and kissed it. One (of the Brāhmaṇas) said, "The task was accomplished by my effort." Another said, "O blessed one, this was achieved by me." Then Hanumān said, "O Brāhmaṇas, stay on for three nights so that you will get the merit of (visiting) Rāmatīrtha."

40a. Saying "So be it", the Brāhmaṇas performed the rite of *Brahmayajña.*

40b. By recitation of the Vedas at a high pitch, they (as it were) deafened the forest.

41. After staying for three nights, those Brāhmaṇas intending to depart told Hanumān thus at night with excellent devotion:

42-44. "We shall go to the holy Dharmāraṇya the (next) morning. O dear one, we should not be forgotten. (Let everything) be forgiven."

Then, O king, the Son of the Wind-god (broke) a big rock from the mountain and made it quadrangular in shape and ten Yojanas in extent. After spreading it, he said to the Brāhmaṇas, "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, well-guarded by me, you all lie down on the rock free of worries."

45. On hearing this, all of them had very happy sleep. Having

fulfilled their task thus, they all slept in the beginning of the night.

46. That compassionate protector of the charter of Rāma, Hanumān, identical with Rudra, stayed on the earth for the sake of protecting the Brāhmaṇas.

Vyāsa said:

47-49. At midnight when all of them were fast asleep, (Hanumān) prayed to his father: "You have rendered great favour, O Samīraṇa, take these Brāhmaṇas to their abode."

Urged by his son Hanumān, the father lifted up the rock (along with the Brāhmaṇas), O descendant of Bharata. The excellent one took these good Brāhmaṇas to their abode.

50. Within three Muhūrtas he reached Dharmāraṇya covering the path (distance) traversed by the Brāhmaṇas in six months.

51-53. Knowing that the rock was moving, one of the Brāhmaṇas born of Vātsya Gotra sang sweetly (some) Ślokas to the other Brāhmaṇas. On hearing the song, they were surprised. When the day dawned well, they woke up and wakened one another. Extremely astonished, all said, "Is this a dream or a delusion?" With thrill and excitement, they got up and saw Satyamandira.

54. By means of their inner sense, they saw this as the power of the Son of the Wind-god. On hearing the sound of the Vedic chant, the Brāhmaṇas experienced excessive delight.

55. On seeing the great rock, the villagers considered it a great miracle. They wondered what it was.

56-57. Those people announced that miracle to every household: "That splendid rock is full of Brāhmaṇas. We do not know whether it is auspicious or inauspicious." They thus discussed among themselves.

Vyāsa said:

58-60. Then those sons as well as grandsons of the Brāhmaṇas came there and said, "Fortunately, those wayfaring Brāhmaṇas have returned." With delighted mind, they saw (each other) face to face. They did everything concerning the reception like standing up, saluting, embracing, kissing, sniffing gladly etc. They duly honoured them. The details were narrated fully and the quick return explained.

61. After adoring them all (by presenting them) sweet scents, betel-leaves and saffron, they went to their houses joyously, re-

citing the Śānti verses.

62. In the morning, the travellers got up in the great Pīṭha of Ānandā. They saw the great holy spot and were filled with eagerness and delight.

63-64. They felt highly surprised. "What is this excellent shrine? In the southern entrance the Śānti Mantras are being chanted. The houses look beautiful like the abode of Indra. The shrines of Kulamātṛ (the Family Mother) are seen as splendid as fire."

65. While the Brāhmaṇas were speaking thus, a Brāhmaṇa who had arrived for the worship of Mahāśakti, saw that group of Brāhmaṇas.

66. Delighted and elated, he went there where the Brāhmaṇas had assembled together. He said: 'Thank Heaven! The wayfaring Brāhmaṇas have arrived."

67. Then the Brāhmaṇas stood up in reverence. Those who had come with materials of worship venerated them. Both the groups saluted each other.

68. As befitting and in accordance with the injunctions, they honoured each other readily. Whatever happened in the presence of the Lord of Monkeys was made known in the presence of Brāhmaṇas.

69. On hearing the words of the travellers, the excellent Brāhmaṇas became filled with delight. Chanting the Śānti Mantras, they went to their homes with delight.

70. They met together and discussed. Everything was fixed by those who were astrologers. Getting up in the morning the Brāhmaṇas set out to Kānyakubja.

71. Some of them were borne in hammocks, some rode horses and chariots, and some were seated in palanquins. They were going in various sorts of vehicles.

72. Having reached the city and going to the splendid banks of Gaṅgā, those intelligent ones camped there and performed the rites of holy bath and distributed monetary gifts etc.

73-75. They were seen by a certain spy and he carried the news to the king's presence: "Here many horses, swinging hammocks and chariots of the Brāhmaṇas residing in Dharmāraṇya are seen. Certainly they have come."

The king said, "They had been sent by me earlier to the presence of the Monkey. Bring them to me."

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Acquisition of the Charter by Brāhmaṇas

Vyāsa said:

1-4. When it dawned clearly, the Brahmavādins ('chanters of the Vedas') performed their early morning rites, wore splendid clothes, bedecked their mighty arms with bracelets set with jewels, adorned (their fingers) with rings and held fruits individually (in their hands).

With ear-rings glittering in their ears, they proceeded gladly. They went and stood at the palace doors. On seeing them the mighty prince smiled a little and said: "O ye ministers, may this be heard. It appears that these excellent Brāhmaṇas have returned after seeing Rāma and Hanumān."

5. After speaking these words the king remained silent. All the Brāhmaṇas sat dawn with two or three seated in every row in due order.

6. They enquired after the king's welfare and that of (his army consisting of) elephants, chariots and infantry. Thereupon, the noble-minded king spoke to the Brāhmanas:

7-10a. "With the favour of Arihanta, I am well in every respect. That is the (real) tongue which glorifies Jina: Those are the (worthy) hands that worship Jina; that is the (real) eye which is fixed at Jina; that is the (real) mind which is engrossed in Jina. Mercy should be shown everywhere; the individual soul should be always venerated. One should go to the Yogaśālā and offer obeisance to the preceptor. The great Mantra '*na cakāra*' (*navakāra* ?)[1] should be recited day and night. 'Pañcūṣaṇa' (Paryūṣaṇa?) should be performed and gifts should always be made to Śamaṇas."

10b-13. On hearing these words the Brāhmaṇas gnashed their teeth. Heaving a great sigh, they spoke to the king: "It has been told by Rāma and the intelligent Hanumān: 'It is known all over the world that you are most righteous person. Give (back) the (means of) livelihood to the Brāhmaṇas. It will be known that it is given by you, never by me'. Keep to the words of Rāma and be happy by doing it."

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1. '*na cakāra*' is a scribal error for '*navakāra*'. The scribe's ignorance about the term *navakāra* signifying a salute to *pañca-parameṣṭhins*, is probably responsible for this confusion.

The king said:

14-15. May all of you go where Rāma and Hanūmān are staying. Rāma will give everything. What for did you come here, O Brāhmaṇas? I will never give. I will never give even a *Varāṭikā* (a cowrie); no village and no means of livelihood. Go wherever it pleases you.

16-21. On hearing the terrible words, the Brāhmaṇas were excited with anger. They said, "Well, suffer from the anger of Rāma and Hanumān now." After saying this, they threw down the packet of hair from the left armpit given by Hanumān in the abode of the king. The excellent Brāhmaṇas then retired.

When the group of the Brāhmaṇas departed, the whole place was ablaze with columns of flames. Everything became full of flames of fire. All the royal paraphernalia got enveloped in fire: the umbrellas, the chowries, the treasury-rooms, the arsenals etc. The queens, the princes, the elephants and many horses, the vehicles and conveyances of all sorts—all were completely burning. Palanquins of various sorts and thousands of chariots were burnt. Seeing everything blazing thus, the king became excessively grieved.

22. There was none to save him. All men were frightened and bewildered. That fire could not be controlled by *Mantras* (spells), *Yantras* (mystic diagrams) or *Mūlikas* (herbs).

23. When Rāma becomes angry, his anger destroys crores of the crooked. All perish at his anger. What to say of the (insignificant) Kumārapālaka?

24-25. Seeing everything burnt down, the naked Jaina mendicants, trembling again and again, took in their hands their pots, auspicious sticks, red blankets and without shoes or sandals fled away to ten directions.

26. They made loud and confused noise, "All of us are undoubtedly set on fire by the chief Brāhmaṇas. Run away, run away."

27-28. Some of them had their pots broken, some their sticks. Those naked ones fled away, some calling 'Vītarāga' and some 'Arhanta' while running.

Then the Wind blew, as if to kindle the fire all the more.

29-30. He had been sent by Hanumān with a desire to save the interest of the Brāhmaṇas.

The king ran on foot here and there alone and lamenting en-

quired, "Where are the Brāhmaṇas?" On hearing from the people, the king went to that place where the Brāhmaṇas (were resting).

31. O king, after going there suddenly, he caught hold immediately of the feet of the Brāhmaṇas. The king fell down unconscious.

32. Repeating the name of the son of Daśaratha, "Rāma, Rāma", the king with deep humility spoke these words to the Brāhmaṇas:

33. "I am the servant of the servant of that Rāma and of Brāhmaṇas. I had become blind through the darkness of ignorance.

34. The magic ointment, the great medicine, viz. Rāma's name, has been obtained by me. Those men who serve and adore other gods than Rāma are being burnt by the fire, O lord, like me whose mind is deluded.

35. (Repeating thrice) Hari, Bhāgirathī and Vipras—this is the essence (most important) in the three worlds.

36. Brāhmaṇas, Gaṅgā and Hari are the stairway to heaven. The name of Rāma is the great rope(-way) whereby one in led (taken up) to Vaikuṇṭha."

37-41. Lamenting in this manner, the king spoke with palms joined in reverence: "O Brāhmaṇas, may the fire be extinguished. I shall restore to you the charter. Now I am your slave, O Brāhmaṇas. My words shall not be otherwise. (If they be so) let me incur the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, of defiling other men's wives, the sin of drinking liquor, of stealing gold and of the assassination of the preceptor. Whatever you desire, I shall grant it. Devotion to Brāhmaṇas as well as to Rāma should (will) always be engaged in by me. I shall never do anything other than these, O Brāhmaṇas."

42-44. On that occasion, O king, the Brāhmaṇas became merciful. In order to quell the curse, they threw the other packet. When the hairs were thrown, the army regained life. The quarters became clear and pure. The trumpeting sounds produced in all the quarters quietened down. The subjects became hale and hearty with mind full of great delight. Everything, the sons and grandsons, stood as before.

45. As before, the common people became obedient to Brāhmaṇas. Excepting the Viṣṇu cult, they did not know (i.e. recognize) any other religious belief.

46-48. A new letter of authority legally binding as before was issued. Heretics were banished, duly making the scripture hold good. Those outside the pale of the Vedas including the good, the

middling and the lowly disappeared. The class of merchants called Aḍhavījas was formed among those former thirty-six thousand Gobhujas. All of them were directed to attend to the Brāhmaṇas.

49. They were very efficient and of good conduct. They adored the gods and the Brāhmaṇas. Renouncing the path of heretics, they became devout followers of Viṣṇu.

50-51. Coming to the banks of Gaṅgā, the king handed over the letter of authority to them with sincere devotion. He handed it over to the Traividyas.

When the Brāhmaṇas who had deviated from the duty which they owed to the place (Dharmāraṇya and the shrine) approached, (to claim the rights in the charter) the king was requested by those Brāhmaṇas who had created the trouble:

52. "O king, remove those Brāhmaṇas who broke their words." There were disputes in regard to the livelihood bequeathed.

53. In order to show justice, the assembly members were constituted. When the signatures were checked, they were found to be different.

54. On hearing this, the king made arrangements for *Tulādāna* (gift of gold equal to the weight of the body of the recipient). As the gifts were being offered, the Cāturvidyas spoke:

55-58. "How can we accept monetary gifts, as the caste has been lost by us."

All those Moheraka Brāhmaṇas, the masters of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas who were fifteen thousand in number were warded off from their place. Thereupon, O king, the Vāḍavas (Brāhmaṇas) were called by the king who was a follower of Rāma. He formed a difference in the caste. Trayīvidya Brāhmaṇas who went to the lord, at Setubandha, shall be given the means of livelihood. Those who did not go became Cāturvidyas (in designation).

59. There will not be any relationship with the Vaṇiks nor marriage alliances with them. As the caste has been differentiated, there was no relationship in the means of livelihood at the village.

60. Those Śūdras who were devoted to the Brāhmaṇas and who were not misled by the heretics, those who recanted the Jaina cult, are excellent Gobhūjas.

61. Those who persisted in heresy, those who caused the disappearance of the letter of authority of Rāma—all of them, Brāhmaṇas as well as Śūdras, were beset with restrictions.

62. Those who were true to their promise though living there,

became happy. The Cāturvidyas were colonized by the king outside the village.

63-64. (The king said:) "I must certainly do only such things as will not enrage Rāma. Those who were averse to Rāma and who have reportedly come face to face (i.e. accepted devotion to Rāma) should be known as Cāturvidyas." They were thrown out of the jurisdiction of the assignment of means of livelihood. Then King Kumārapālaka became satisfied as having fulfilled his task.

65-74. With great humility, he spoke in the presence of the Brāhmaṇas: "It was not I who deprived you of your livelihood in the village. This has been brought about by fate.

To whom the fault of (unwittingly) committing an offence can be attributed? Fire is produced in the jungle sheerly due to fate, by falling together of pieces of wood (in friction).

Condition has been set by you for the sake of a token or sign of recognition (of Rāma's charter) having carried out the order of Rāma through the Son of the Wind-god (?).

Ye Brāhmaṇas returned. To whom is that fault to be imputed? Ultimately even one who is a great sinner quickly attains the region of Viṣṇu by remembering Hari. How can there be doubt? When the great merit of a man comes up (to fruition) his intellect becomes inclined towards supreme good.

At the time of the rising of (the consequence of a sin) it shall be just the reverse.

Suspicious disbelief in the immanent soul of living beings is not beneficial. It is that soul that alone protects the three worlds through piety.

Suspicious disbelief in the one whom Indra and other gods and all the ascetics including Sanaka, worship for the sake of salvation, is not beneficial.

It is widely known that Rāma's name is on a par with the thousand names (of Viṣṇu). If one doubts about him, how can there be Siddhi? Hari gave the token of recognition.

The sin committed due to heresy has been wiped off by my bowing down to you. All ye Sirs, be pleased. Refrain from being angry with me."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

75. O king, your piety is impaired by the things happening by

chance. Indeed what is inevitable has to be faced even by great men.

76. The nakedness of Nīlakaṇṭha and the compulsion on Hari to lie on the Great Serpent is brought about by fate which is the creator of happiness and misery.

77. Let the Traividyas of truthful resolve possess the letter of authority of Rāma. As for us, please grant the place where we live.

78-81. On hearing their words, the king became inclined to cause happiness to the Brāhmaṇas. Hence a place was given to them (which became) known as Sukhavāsa.

The king rejoiced immensely by offering with great faith gold, garments, flowers, wish-yielding cows, golden ornaments and different kinds of objects.

Those who had been established by the three gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva) should be known as Trayīvidyas. Those excellent Brāhmaṇas who were settled at Sukhavāsa by the fourth one i.e. the king, became Cāturvidyas in Kali Age.

82-83. All those Cāturvidyas were established in Dharmāraṇya. They bestowed the Vedic blessings on the noble-souled king. Riding chariots and horses, the contented Brāhmaṇas reached the great Moheraka with great delight.

84. It was on the thirteenth day in the bright half of Pauṣa (Dec.-Jan.) that the Brāhmaṇas received the letter of authority. They performed the offerings of oblations with the family deity in view.

85. Every year the offering of oblation should be made in accordance with the injunctions. The holy, auspicious ablution should be performed by a noble-minded person.

86. Song, dance and instrumental music should be had without fail on that day in that month so that there may not be any cessation of the means of livelihood.

87. If *Vṛddhi* (the impurity due to childbirth in the family) happens untimely, first this oblation etc. is given and afterwards Vṛddhi pollution is to be observed.

88-92. The Traividyas born of the family of Moḍha, who were more like broken wayside watersheds, and the Caturvedins (as well) perform Gotra Pūjana. That should be performed in the middle of the rainy season as well as when Lord Janārdana goes to sleep.

If anyone omits this and performs a *Śrauta* or *Smārta* rite (in Pauṣa?) then the family deities become infuriated and destroy everything.

Thereafter at the time of the great celebration of marriage rites and during such rites as *Mauñjībandha* (investiture of the sacred thread) etc., the Muhūrta of Gaṇanātha is auspicious.

Those Brāhmaṇas who were banished by King Āma from his kingdom, the fifteen thousand ones, went to Sukhavāsaka.

93-94. Formerly Rāma himself gave fifty-five villages. The Vaṇiks there gave them means of livelihood. Those persons who bestowed means of livelihood on the Brāhmaṇas, were the Aḍālajas, Māṇḍalīyas and the pure Gobhūjas. They were devoted to the service of Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Different Families and Groups in Dharmāraṇya

Brahmā said:

1-2. Listen, dear son, I shall state the greatest secret. These great Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas are mentioned as *Brahmavids* ('knowers of Brahman'). Regularly they studied their respective branches of Vedas and performed rituals with Vaṣaṭkāra and Svadhākāra. They were obedient to Rāma and acted according to his behests. They were extremely devoted to Hanumān.

3-5. Once upon a time, Devas came to Brahmā. They were desirous of seeing the Brāhmaṇas and they went there with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as their leaders.

On seeing the Devas arrived, they moved forth from their respective places. Offering *Arghya, Pādya* and *Madhuparka*, the Brāhmaṇas worshipped the Devas with Brahmā as (their) leader. Seated in front of Brahmā, they recited the Vedas.

6-9. They recited the *Saṁhitā* by the *Pada, Krama* and *Ghana* method of recitation. The *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā* consisting of the Ṛk Mantras was recited in a high pitch.

They recited the Sāman verses, different kinds of *Stotras, Śāstras, Yājyās, Puronuvākyas* (Introductory verses and hymns) and the

Mantras as follows:[1] that followed by four letters viz. *yajāmahe*, and by the four letters namely *astu śrauṣaṭ*, by the two letters *yaja*, five letters *ve yajāmahe*, two letters *vauṣaṭ*. These constitute Yajña. He who repeats these, along with knowledge thereof, attains the status of Brahman. It is the truth; it is the truth that I speak. All those Brāhmaṇas were engaged in the Vedic chant with concentration of mind.

10. In the courtyards, the deer used to scratch their (matted) hairs. The Brāhmaṇas repeated Vedamātā (Gāyatrī) in accordance with the injunction.

11-13. The young ones of the deer used to eat Darbha grass held forth by them in their hands. On seeing the hermitage of those householders free from enmity, the Devas became satisfied very much and spoke to each other: "Now (it seems to be) Tretāyuga. All of them are devoted to Dharma (righteousness). What can the sinful, so-called wicked Kali, do?" All those three (gods) called the Cāturvidyas and said:

14. "We shall give due share to you and to the Traividyas for the purpose of livelihood. Maintain it as before."

15-17. The Vaṇiks mentioned before were thirty-six thousand in number. The Traividyas numbered three thousand and the Cāturvidyas are said to be fifteen thousand.

They helped one another and had their own livelihood. The Traividyas had three shares and the Atrins had four. They came to the abodes of the merchants everyday and shared with one another the fees for the priestly rites as laid down by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

18-20. There was no inter-marriage between Cāturvidyas and Traividyas. (The details of) the Cāturvidyas and the Traividyas have been declared by me.

Due to their receiving of three shares they are Traividyas and the Atrins had four shares. This differentiation (in the share) of the castes was created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Those Brāhmaṇas became satisfied and bowed down to those excellent Suras. After

1. Some terms herein are symbolic. The first term *Caturakṣara* implies *'yajāmahe'*. The second term *Caturakṣara* indicates the four syllables: *astu śrauṣaṭ*, *Pañcākṣara* the five-syllabled: *ye yajāmahe*, and *dvyakṣara* implies two syllables *'yaju'* and *'vauṣaṭ'*, the last consonant -ṭ- not being a syllable.

These sentences are to be uttered by the Adhvaryu Priest in the course of performance of a sacrifice. Thus the line states: "They recited the Mantras followed by the four letters *yajāmahe*, also Mantras followed by the four letters *'astu vauṣaṭ'*, by two letters viz. *'yaja'*, by five syllables *'ye yajāmahe'* and by two syllables *'vauṣaṭ'*.

assigning the means of livelihood, the Devas went back to their respective abodes.

21. The Brāhmaṇas, Cāturvidyas and Traividyas, together were residents of fifty-five villages.

22-24. There are fifteen Gotras of the Cāturvidyas, viz. Bhāradvāja, Vatsa, Kauśika, Kuśa, Śāṇḍilya, Kaśyapa, Gautama, Chādana, Jātūkarṇya, Kunta, Vaśiṣṭha, Dhāraṇa, Ātreya, Māṇḍila and Laugākṣa. I shall mention in due order the names of their own (original) native places.

25-33. They are* Sītāpura, Śrīkṣetra, Magoḍī, Jyeṭhaloja, Śeratha, Chede, Tālī, Vanoḍī, Govyandalī, Kaṇṭācoṣalī, Koheca, Candana, Thalagrāma, Soha, Hāthañja, Kapaḍavāṇaka, Vrajanhori, Vanoḍī, Phīṇā, Vagola, Dṛṇa, Thalajā, Cāraṇa, Siddhā, Bhālaja, Mahovī, Āīyā, Malīā, Godharī, Āmata, Vāṭhasuhālī, Māṇajā, Sānadīyā, Ānandīyā, Pāṭaḍīa, Ṭīkolīya, Gaṁbhī, Dhaṇiā, Mātrā, Nātamorā, Valolā, Rāntyajā, Rūpolā, Bodhaṇī, Chatroṭā, Aluevā, Vāsataḍīā, Jāṣāsaṇā, Gotīyā, Caraṇīyā, Dudhīyā, Hālolā, Vaiholā, Asālā, Nāladā, Deholo, Sauhāsīyā and Saṁhālīyā. These are the fifty-five villages in due order, given by Rāma to the Brāhmaṇas duly.

34. Henceforth I shall tell the Gotrajas of these villages. So also the Pravaras will be mentioned in due form.

35. After knowing the Gotradevī (the deity of the Gotra) and the Pravara, the Svasthāna (native place) is known. The Brāhmaṇas are the residents of Svasthāna.

Nārada said:

36. How is Gotra known? How is Kula known? How is the deity known? Explain that correctly.

Brahmā said:

37. Sītāpura is the first one. There are two Pravaras: Kuśa and Vatsa. They have been narrated to you by me.

38. Śrīkṣetra is the second. There are three Gotras: Chāndanasa, Vatsa and Kuśa—the third Gotra.

39. The third village is Mudgala. Kuśa and Bhāradvāja (are the Pravaras), Śoholī is the fourth. Kuśa is the Pravara.

40. Jyeṣṭhalā is the fifth. Vatsa and Kuśa are glorified (as

*The original editor states that the list is not grammatically correct. He printed it as per MS before him.

Pravaras). Śreyasthāna is the sixth (and has) Bhāradvāja and Kuśa (as Pravaras).

41. Dantalī is the seventh. Bhāradvāja and Kuśa (are the Parvaras). Vaṭasthāna is the eighth. Understand this, O excellent son.

42. There are three Gotras there—Kuśa, Kutsa and Bhāradvāja. Rājñaḥ Pura is the ninth with Bhāradvāja as the Pravara.

43. Kṛṣṇavāṭa is the tenth with Kuśa as Pravara. Dahaloḍa is the eleventh with Vatsa as Pravara.

44. Cekhali is the twelfth with Pauka and Kuśa as Pravaras.

45. Cāñcodakhe and Deholoḍī have Atri, Vatsa and Kutsa too as Pravaras. Of Bhāradvājikoṇā (the Pravaras are) Bhāradvāja, Golandṛṇa and Āśaku.

46. In the two, viz. Thala and Tyajā, Kuśa and Dhāraṇa (are the Pravaras). Naraṇasiddhā is Svasthāna of which Kutsa is glorified as the Gotra.

47-48. Bhālajā has Kutsa and Vatsa (as Pravara). Mohovī, Ākuśa, and Īyāślīā have Śāṇḍila. So also Godharī Pātra and Ānandīya have two Pravaras viz. Bhāradvāja and Śāṇḍila. Pāṭadīā has Kuśa as Pravara.

49. Vāṁsaḍīā and Jāsvā and Kautsmaṇā as Pravara have Vatsa, Ātreya; and Akuśa and Gautama (are) of Gītā.

50. Caraṇīā has Bhāradvāja. Dudhīā has Dhārāṇasā. Sonnā has Māṇḍilya.

51. Vailola has Huśa. Asālā has Kuśa (and) Dhāraṇā is the second.

52. Nālolā, Vatsadhāraṇīyā and Delolā have Kutsa. Sohāsīyā has Bhāradvāja, Kuśa and Vatsa.

53. Suhālīā is spoken of having Vatsa. The Gotras and Svasthānas have been mentioned in due order.

54-55. Those who are mentioned as Śītavāḍiyas have Kuśa and Vatsa as Pravara, Viśvāmitra and Devarāta and the third Dala. Bhārgava, Cyāvana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni are the Sages. Vacā, Ardaśeṣā and Vutalā are glorified as Gotra deities.

Thus (ends information about) the first Gotra.*

56-58. Śrīkṣetra is mentioned as the second. There are two Gotras—Chādanasa and Vatsa. The Devīs—goddesses are two. Āṅgirasa, Aṁbarīṣa, Yauvanāśva, Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni are the Sages. The female deity is mentioned as

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*Though not supported in the text, the editor thinks that 'Moheraka' should have been mentioned as the first Sthāna.

Bhaṭṭārikā and the second one is Śepalā.

Listen to them (the characteristics of those born of this family), O excellent one among sages.

59. They are irascible but of good conduct. They are devoted to the rites as mentioned in Śrutis and Smṛtis. They are engaged in the five Yajñas and they have permanent relationship. All of them are excellent kings; they are conversant with (treatment of) wounds and are born of sacrifice.

Thus (ends) the second Gotra.

60. The third one is Magoḍoā. There are two Gotras: Bhāradvāja and Kutsa. The Devīs are two.

61. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja are the three Pravaras. Viśvāmitra and Devarāta are the Sages.

62-63. Śeṣalā, Budhalā and Ādhāraśānti are mentioned as deities. The Brāhmaṇas born in this village are truthful in speech. They are observers of the rite of worshipping Brāhmaṇas. They are devoted to different kinds of Yajñas. All are devoted to different kinds of Yajñas. All the Brāhmaṇas born in this village are leading sages.

Thus (ends) the third Gotra.

64-66. The fourth is Śīholiyā village. There are two Gotras: Viśvāmitra and Devarāta and the third is Audala. The deity is Cacāī. She is glorified as the deity of the Gotra. All those born in this Gotra are weak and given to worrying. The Brāhmaṇas, O excellent king, are liars and greedy. But they are excellent Brāhmaṇas well-versed in all scriptures.

Thus the fourth Sthāna.

67-71. Jyeṣṭhalojā is the fifth Svasthāna that is glorified. Two Pravaras, viz. Vatsaśīya and Kutsaśīya are declared (for this place). Āvarivṛvāpra,* Yauvanāśva, Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpana, Aurva and Jamadagni are the Sages (?).

Cacāī is the deity of Vatsagotra and Śāntā is born of Kutsa Gotra. With these three and five (Sages) the Brāhmaṇas are of the nature of Brahman.

They are quiescent and have control over their sense-organs. Their conduct is good. They are endowed with wealth and sons. They are devoid of the study of the Vedas but are experts in all types of works. Handsome in form, they follow the mores and

*Probably Āvari—Vṛvāpra (?) are two separate names. If so taken, the number eight ("three and five") mentioned in the next verse (69b) becomes meaningful.

conduct of Śiṣṭas (good people). They are well established in all types of pious rituals. The Brāhmaṇas born here offer water (in plenty); they are engaged in the pious activity of making gifts.

Thus (ends) the fifth Sthāna.

72-75. Those born in Śerathā villages have two Paravaras—Kuśa and Bhāradvāja. There are two deities. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta, the third Audala, Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja are the Sages. Kamalā, the great Lakṣmī, is the deity. The second deity is Yakṣiṇī.

Those born in this Gotra are scholars engaged in rites laid down in Śrutis and Smṛtis. They regularly engage themselves in the study of the Vedas. They are ascetics and suppressors of enemies (within and without). They engage themselves in performing Yajñas for self and on behalf of others. All those Brāhmaṇas mentioned by me are devoted to all Brāhmaṇical rituals.

Thus (ends) the sixth Sthāna.

76. The people of Dantālī have Bhāradvāja, Kutsa, Śāya, Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja(?) as the Sages.

77-78. Yakṣiṇī is mentioned as the deity. So also (is) Karmalā. The Brāhmaṇas born in this Gotra are splendid and wealthy. They dress well and adorn themselves with ornaments. They have great devotion to Brāhmaṇas. All of them are ready to feed Brāhmaṇas and are devoted to religious rites.

Thus (ends) the seventh Sthāna.

79. Those born in the Vaḍodrīya family are known to have four Pravaras, viz. Kuśa, Kutsa, Vatsa and Bhāradvāja.

80-85. I shall mention their Pravaras(?) and Gotras in due order. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala.

Āṅgirasa, Aṁbarīṣa and the third Yauvanāśva. Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni. So also Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja.

Karmalā, Kṣemalā, Dhārabhaṭṭārikā and the fourth Kṣemalā(?) are mentioned as the Gotra mothers in due order.

Those born in this Gotra are always engaged in performing the rite of Pañcayajña. They are greedy and hot-tempered and prolific in progeny. They are engaged in the rites of holy ablution, offering gifts etc. They have always control over their sense-organs (?). They dig (and construct) thousands of wells, tanks and lakes. Ready to take up vows and observances, they are aware of what is good. They are fools devoid of Vedic study.

Thus (ends) the eighth Sthāna.

86-89. In the village named Godaṇīya, there are two Gotras: Vatsa Gotra is the first and Bhāradvāja is the second. Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva, and Purodhasa are the Sages. Śiharī should be known as the first (deity) and the second Yakṣiṇī. The Brāhmaṇas born of this Gotra are richly endowed with wealth and grain. They tend to be angry but are devoid of covetousness. They are vindictive and crooked. O king, they are mentioned by me as given to violence and covetous of wealth.

Thus the ninth Sthāna.

90-92. The Brāhmaṇas in the village Kaṇṭavāḍīā are born of Kuśa Gotra. I shall mention its Pravara. Listen, you excellent king. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and Udala—these three are declared (as Sages). Cacāī is mentioned as the deity. Listen, you excellent king. With delighted and concentrated minds they perform sacrifices. The Brāhmaṇas are experts in all scriptures. They are truthful in speech.

Thus the tenth Sthāna.

93-97. People of Vekhalo (Vekhala?) are mentioned by me as born of Kutsa family. They have three Pravaras. Listen, you excellent king. The three (Pravaras) viz. Viśvāmitra, Devarāja (? Devarāta) and Audala are remembered. Cacāī is remembered as their deity protecting the family. The Brāhmaṇas are noble-souled, possessing Sattva and endowed with good qualities. They are ascetics, Yogins and masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas (ancillaries to the Vedas). They are good people, observers of traditional code of conduct, engrossed in devotion to Viṣṇu. They regularly perform Sandhyā prayers and holy ablution. They eagerly feed the Brāhmaṇas. These are mentioned by me as belonging to this family. You listen hereafter.

Thus (ends) the eleventh Sthāna.

98-101. Those of Dehaloḍīā are mentioned as having Kutsa Pravara. Āṅgirasa, Āmbarīṣa and the third Yuvanāśva. Śrīśeṣadurbalā is declared by me as the Gotra deity. Those who are born in Kutsa family are of good conduct and truthful in speech. They regularly study the Vedas. They see only weak points and loopholes of others. They are hot-tempered and devoid of inconstancy, haters and crooked (in attitude). Aggressively violent these born of Kutsa are covetous of wealth.

Thus (ends) the twelfth Sthāna.

102-107. In Koha, the Brāhmaṇas are said to have three Gotras,

viz. Bhāradvāja, Vatsa and the third Kuśa also. I shall mention the Pravaras also in the order of the Gotras. (They are) Bhārgava, Çyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni. The Pravaras of the third Gotra Kuśa are three, viz. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala. Yakṣiṇī is mentioned as the first (deity) and the second is Śīhurī. Cacāī is mentioned as the third. These are the deities of the Gotra in due order.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this Gotra are scholars engaged in the rites laid down in Śruti and Smṛtis. They regularly study the Vedas. They are ascetics suppressing (their) enemies. Hot-tempered, greedy and wicked, they are engaged in performing Yajñas for themselves as well as on other's behalf. All of them are mentioned by me as excellent Brāhmaṇas devoted to Brāhmaṇical rituals.

Thus (ends) the thirteenth Sthāna.

108-111. Those who are born in Cāndaṇakheḍa are of Bhāradvāja Gotra. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and the third Bhāradvāja are the Sages. Yakṣiṇī has been mentioned as the deity here by the intelligent Vyāsa.

Those who are born as Bhāradvāja Brāhmaṇas have the form of Brahman. They are calm. They have control over their sense-organs. They are of good moral conduct. They are possessed of wealth and sons. The Brāhmaṇas in Dharmāraṇya are excellent and are experts in the sacrificial ritual. All of them are devoted to their preceptors and they bring glory to their family.

Thus (ends) the fourteenth Sthāna.

112-114. Those born in Thala village hail from Bhāradvāja family. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and the third Bhāradvāja (are the Sages).

The Brāhmaṇas who are born in this Gotra are splendid and wealthy. They bedeck themselves in good garments and ornaments and are devout respecters of Brāhmaṇas. All of them enthusiastically feed Brāhmaṇas and are highly religious. The protectress named Yakṣiṇī has been spoken of by me as the Gotra deity.

Thus (ends) the fifteenth Sthāna.

115-119. Those who are born in Moūtrī are mentioned (as belonging to) two Gotras, Bhāradvāja and Kaśyapa. The two deities Cāmuṇḍā and Yakṣiṇī have been glorified as deity here. Kaśyapa, Avatsāra and the third Naidhruva. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and the third Bhāradvāja (these are the Sages).

(The Brāhmaṇas here) utter pleasing words; they are highly

efficient and always devoted to their preceptors. They always have good prestige and they are engaged in activities beneficial to all living beings. The Brāhmaṇas of Kaśyapa Gotra perform great Yajñas. They perform Yajñas on behalf of all others and they are remembered as great Yājñikas.

Thus (ends) the sixteenth Sthāna.

120-122. Those born in Hāthījaṇa are of Vatsa and Bhāradvāja Gotras. Jñānajā and Yakṣiṇī have been glorified as the deities of the Gotra. Those born in this Gotra are always engaged in Pañcayajña. They are covetous and fiery-tempered. They have ample progeny. They are learned. They are engaged in holy ablution, offering gifts and other rites. They are devout worshippers of Viṣṇu. They habitually take to vows and observances. Devoid of Vedic study, they are fools—innocent of good qualities and wisdom.

Thus (ends) the seventeenth Sthāna.

123-127. The Brāhmaṇas born in Kapaḍvāṇa have Bhāradvāja and Kuśa as Gotras. Yakṣiṇī and the second one Cacāī are mentioned as the deities. Āṅgirasa, Bārhapatya and the third Bhāradvāja; Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala (these are the Sages).

Those who are born in this Gotra are speakers of truth. They excel in vows and observances. They have subdued their sense-organs. They are handsome with splendid countenances. They take very little food. They are ever engaged in work and are conversant with Purāṇas. They are devoted to offering great gifts. Never hating any, they are still covetous. They are engaged in the study of the Vedas. They are far-sighted and prudent, highly lustrous but are deluded by the great Māyā.

Thus (ends) the eighteenth Sthāna.

128-131. The Brāhmaṇas of Janhorī are mentioned as having Kuśa as Pravara. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala (are the Sages). Tāraṇī of great Māyā is glorified as the Gotra deity.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family, O king, are unbearable. Huge in body and tall in height. They are highly arrogant, distressful in appearance and black-complexioned. They are experts in all scriptures. Voracious in eating, they are wealthy and clever, devoid of hatred and sinful activities. Deformed, these Brāhmaṇas dress and adorn themselves well. They discuss Brahman, the Absolute.

Thus (ends) the nineteenth Sthāna.

132-136. To those who are born in Vanoḍī the Gotras are three in number. Kuśa and Kutsa are Pravaras; the third is Bhāradvāja.

Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala. Āṅgirasa, Āmbarīṣa and the third Yuvanāśva. So also Āṅgīrasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja (as Sages).

Śeṣalā is mentioned as the first Gotra deity, Śāntā is the second and the third Dhāraśānti. These are the Gotra-deities in due order.

Those who are born in this Gotra are weak and feeble-minded. The Brāhmaṇas speak falsehood. They are greedy, O excellent king. Experts in all scriptures, these Brāhmaṇas are the most excellent ones among the knowers of Brahman.

Thus (ends) the twentieth Sthāna.

137-140. The Sthāna Kīṇāvācanaka is the twenty-first. The splendid Brāhmaṇas, the leading Brāhmaṇas are mentioned to belonging to Bhāradvāja gotra. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja are so (the Sages). Goddess Yakṣiṇī is glorified as the Gotra deity.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are wealthy and brilliant. Dressing and adorning themselves, they are devoted to Brāhmaṇas. All of them eagerly feed Brāhmaṇas and all are righteous.

Thus (ends) the twenty-first Sthāna.

141-144. The excellent Brāhmaṇas who are born in the Sthāna Govindaṇā belong to Kuśa Gotra. They have three Pravaras: Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and Audala. The great goddess Cacāī is glorified as the Gotra deity.

The Brāhmaṇas who are born in this family perform sacrifices with delighted and concentrated mind. Experts in all scriptures, they are devotees of Brāhmaṇas and are the most excellent ones among the knowers of Brahman.

Thus (ends) the twenty-second Sthāna.

145-149. Of the Brāhmaṇas born in Thalatyāja, there are two Gotras in which they are established. Dhāraṇa and Saṅkuśa are the two Gotras.

Agastya, Dārḍhyacyuta and Rathyavāhana; Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala are the Sages. Chatrajā is mentioned as the (first) deity and the second one is Thalajā.

Those Brāhmaṇas who are born in the Dhāraṇa Gotra have three Pravaras. They are friendly to Brāhmaṇas and the most excellent ones among the knowers of Brahman. They are *Sāttvika* in nature and have good qualities. Those who are born in their family are devoted to virtuous rites. Wealthy, pursuing knowledge steadfastly, they are engaged in penance, Yajña and other rituals. This is mentioned as the twenty-third Sthāna of the Brāhmaṇas of Moḍhaka caste.

Thus (ends) the twenty-third Sthāna.

150-153. Those Brāhmaṇas who are called *Vāraṇasiddhas* are the foremost among persons of wisdom. The Brāhmaṇas of this Gotra (family) are speakers of truth and of accomplished vows and observances. They have conquered their sense-organs. They are handsome-looking and of splendid countenance. They take only very little food. They are ever endeavouring. They are conversant with the Purāṇas and devoted to the offering of great gifts. They never hate others and are not covetous. They are devoted to the study of the Vedas, are far-sighted and highly brilliant but deluded by the great Māyā. This is mentioned as the twenty-fourth Sthāna. It is considered to be the greatest.

Thus (ends) the twenty-fourth Sthāna.

154-158. The Brāhmaṇas born in Bhāla are said to be truthful in speech. There are two Gotras: Vatsa and Kuśa. I shall mention their Pravaras, viz. five and three. Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni; Āṅgirasa, Āmbarīṣa and the third Yauvanāśva. Śāntā and Śeṣalā are the two deities here.

Persons born in this family are of good conduct and truthful in speech. They have various complexions but they are calm. Devoid of wealth, they wear dirty clothes. Proud and inconstant, they are steady in the Vedas and scriptural studies. The twenty-fifth Svasthāna of Moḍha class has been mentioned.

Thus (ends) the twenty-fifth Sthāna.

159-163. Those Brāhmaṇas belonging to Mahovīā are the foremost among the knowers of Brahman. They have only one Gotra named Kuśa and it is sacred. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala (are the Sages). Goddess Cavāī (?Cacāī) is established here as the protectress.

Those who are born in this Gotra are speakers of truth. They have conquered their sense-organs. Handsome in appearance and splendid-countenanced, they are truthful in observances and vows. They take very little food. They are kind and sympathetic. They are engaged in activities conducive to the welfare of all living beings. The twenty-sixth centre (Svasthāna) of the propounders of Brahman has been mentioned. They have been praised by Rāma and his younger brother.

Thus (ends) the twenty-sixth Sthāna.

164.-I shall now describe the twenty-seventh Svasthāna, viz. Tiyāśrīyā. Brāhmaṇas who are born here are masters of the Vedas.

165-166. Here the Gotra is Śāṇḍilya (of the Brāhmaṇas) as mentioned by excellent Vedic scholars. They have five Pravaras. Jñānajā is the deity here. Kāśyapa, Avatsāra, Śāṇḍilya, Asita and the fifth one Devala—these are the Pravaras in due order. Goddess Jñānajā is mentioned as the deity of the Sthāna.

167-169. Those Brāhmaṇas who are born in this family are brilliant like the sun. They are cool like the moon. All these are well-established in Dharmāraṇya. O great king, they are of good conduct and devoted to the study of the Vedas and scriptural texts. They are performers of Yajñas and of auspicious conduct. They are devoted to truth and cleanliness. They are conversant with piety, habituated to offer gifts, pure and always enthusiastic, close adherents of penance and study of the Vedas. They are devoted to justice and righteousness. This is the twenty-seventh Sthāna as (is) described by the excellent knowers of the Vedas.

Thus (ends) the twenty-seventh Sthāna.

170-175. Brāhmaṇas of great knowledge and wisdom were born in Godharī. I shall mention in due order their three Gotras. The first one is Dhāraṇasa; the second is Jātūkarṇa and the third is Kauśika. This is in due order.

Those who are born of Dhāraṇasa Gotra have three Pravaras—Agasti, Dāḍhacyuta and one named Idhmavāhana.

Vasiṣṭha, Ātreya and the third one Jātūkarṇa (are the Pravaras of the second Gotra while that of the third are:) Viśvāmitra, Mādhucchandasa, and the third Aghamarṣaṇa. The extremely powerful Māleyā, the second one Yakṣiṇī and the third one Mahāyogī—these are glorified as the deities of the Gotra.

The Brāhmaṇas who are born in this family are truthful in utterance. Devoid of inconstancy, performing great Yajñas, they abide by the injunctions in the Vedas.

Thus (ends) twenty-eighth Sthāna.

176-183. Of those who are born in Vāṭastrahāla, there are three Gotras. Dhāraṇa should be known as the first; the second is called Vatsa and the third is named Kutsa. The Gotra deities (are mentioned later).

The first one is Dhāraṇagotra with three Pravaras: Agasti, Dārḍhācyuta and Idhmavāhana

The second Gotra named Vatsa has five Pravaras: Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jamadagni.

The third Gotra named Kutsa has three Pravaras. Āṅgirasa,

Āṁbarīṣa and the third, Yauvanāśva.

Goddess Chatrajā, the second Śeṣalā and goddess Jñānajā are the deities of the Gotras in due order.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this Gotra are truthful in speech; they have conquered their sense-organs. They are handsome; they take only very little food; they are devoted to offering great gifts. They never hate; they are covetous and devoted to the study of the Veda. Far-sighted, highly brilliant, highly enthusiastic, they are truthful in speech.

Thus (ends) the twenty-ninth Sthāna.

184-189. Māṇajā is a great Sthāna. There are two Gotras. Śāṇḍilya and Kuśa are mentioned as the two Gotras. Kaśyapa, Avatsāra, Śāṇḍilya, Asita and the fifth one Devala: all these are of a single Gotra. Jñānajā is said to be the deity here.

The second Gotra, Kuśa, has three Pravaras: Viśvāmitra, Devarāja (? Devarāta) and the third one Audala. Jñānadā is glorified as the second deity of this place.

Those who are born in this Gotra are weak and feeble-minded. Speakers of falsehood, these Brāhmaṇas are greedy, O excellent king. They are efficient in all scriptures. The Brāhmaṇas are the most excellent among Brāhmaṇas.

Thus (ends) the thirtieth Sthāna.

190-193. Sāṇadā is a great Sthāna; it is considered very holy. The Brāhmaṇas staying there belong to Kuśa Pravara and are known to be pure and purifying. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala (are the Sages). The great goddess Jñanadā is glorified as the Gotra-deity. Those who are born in this Gotra are feeble and wretched in their minds. The Brāhmaṇas are liars, O excellent king; and they are very greedy. The Brāhmaṇas are efficient in all scriptures and are the foremost among the knowers of Brahman.

Thus (ends) thirty-first Sthāna.*

194-198. In the Ānandīyā Sthāna there are two Gotras, one is named Bhāradvāja and Śāṇḍilya is the second. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and the third Bhāradvāja (are the Sages). The goddess Cacāī is glorified as the Gotra-deity. Kāśyapa, Avatsāra, Śāṇḍilya, Asita and the fifth one Devala constitute the Pravaras (of Śāṇḍilya?) in the order. Goddess Jñānajā is mentioned as the Gotra-deity.

*Here the qualities of Brāhmaṇas of thirtieth and thirty-first Sthānas being the same, the same verses are repeated.

Those who are born in this family are pure in mind and non-covetous. They are satisfied with what is acquired casually. The Brāhmaṇas are the foremost among those who know Brahman.

Thus (ends) the thirty-second Sthāna.

199-201. Pāṭaḍīyā is glorified as a great pure Sthāna. They (Brāhmaṇas hereof) belong to Kuśa Gotra with three Pravaras: Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala.

Those who are born in this Gotra are devoted to the Vedas and scriptural texts. The Brāhmaṇas are proud and cheerful and carry on activities along the path of justice.

Thus (ends) thirty-third Sthāna.

202-204. Ṭīkoliyā is a great Sthāna with Kuśa as the Gotra (of the Brāhmaṇas thereof). Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala (are the Sages). Goddess Cacāī is glorified as the Gotra-deity. The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are devoted to Śruti and Smṛti. Sickly, greedy and wicked, they are engaged in performing Yajña for themselves as well as on behalf of others. All the Moḍhas (Brāhmaṇas of Moḍha Community) have been mentioned by me as devoted to the rituals of Brāhmaṇas.

Thus (ends) thirty-fourth Sthāna.

205-207. Gamīdhāṇīya is the greatest Sthāna mentioned as the thirty-fifth one. Dhāraṇasa is the Gotra and the goddess is Mahābalā. (The Sages:) Agasti, Dārḍhācyuta and Idhmavāhana are their names. The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are devoted to Brahman, non-covetous, highly intelligent and strict adherents of Vedic injunctions.

Thus (ends) the thirty-fifth Sthāna.

208-210. Mātrā is the greatest Sthāna sanctifying all living beings; the sacred Kuśa Gotra is firmly established here. Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third one Audala(?) The great goddess Jñānadā is the sole protectress of all the worlds.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are devoted to Devas. They have Svādhyāya and Vaṣaṭkāra and they are the sponsors of Vedic and scriptural activities.

Thus (ends) the thirty-sixth Sthāna.

211-213. Nātamorā is a great Sthāna. It is sacred and extremely auspicious. The Gotra is Kuśa with the three Pravaras: Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Audala. Goddess Jñānajā is glorified as the Gotra-deity (presiding goddess of the Gotra). The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are the foremost among the knowers of Brahman. They are efficient in piety, of truthful speech and devoted to

observance of holy vows and offering of gifts.

Thus (ends) the thirty-seventh Sthāna.

214-216. Balolā is a great Sthāna, sanctifying and extremely miraculous. Kuśa as Gotra has been mentioned with the three Pravaras as have been mentioned before. Mānadā is the goddess here.

In this family, the ancestors are said to have been created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. The Brāhmaṇas utter falsehood, O excellent king; and they are greedy. The Brāhmaṇas are experts in all learnings; they are excellent Brāhmaṇas.

Thus (ends) the thirty-eighth Sthāna.

217-219. Rājyajā is a great Sthāna with Laugākṣa as the Pravara (? Gotra). The three Pravaras are Kāśyapa, Avatsāra and Vāsiṣṭha. Yoginī Bhadrā is glorified as the Gotra deity.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are devoted to Vedas. They always observe the rites of daily ablution, daily Homa and daily offering of gifts. Always engaged in virtuous deeds, they are devoted to *Nitya* (usual) and *Naimitta* (special, occasional) rituals.

Thus (ends) the thirty-ninth Sthāna.

220-225. Rupolā is the greatest Sthāna, sanctifying and extremely meritorious. Here there are three Gotras and three deities. Kutsa and Vatsa are the first two and the third is Bhāradvāja; Āṅgirasa, Āmbarīṣa and the third Yauvanāśva; Bhṛgu, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jagadagni (? Jamadagni); Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and Bhāradvāja (are the Sages). Goddess Kṣemalā, Dhārabhaṭṭārikā and the third Kṣemalā (?) are mentioned as Gotra-mothers in due order.

Those born in this family are always engaged in Pañcayajñas, are hot-tempered and greedy. They are prolific in progeny, engaged in holy ablution, offering of gifts etc. They have conquered their sense-organs. They have dug (constructed) thousands of wells, tanks and lakes.

Thus (ends) the fortieth Sthāna.

226-229. Bodhaṇī is the greatest Sthāna, sanctifying and destructive of sins. Kuśa and Kauśika are the two Gotras. Viśvāmitra is the first, then Devarāta and Dala (Audala?). So also Viśvāmitra, Aghamarṣaṇa and Kauśika (are the Sages). Yakṣiṇī is the first Gotra-deity and Tāraṇī is the second.

Those who are born in this family are feeble and wretched in their minds. Untruthful in speech, the Brāhmaṇas, O excellent

king, are greedy. The Brāhmaṇas are experts in all learnings and most excellent among Brāhmaṇas.

Thus (ends) the forty-first Sthāna.

230-232. Chatroṭā is the greatest Sthāna, the sole one adored in all the worlds. Kuśa Gotra is said to be the Gotra (of the Brāhmaṇas thereof) and there are three Pravaras: Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Dala (?Audala). Goddess Cacāī is glorified as the Gotra-deity here.

Those who are born in this family are devoted to Vedic and scriptural texts. Those Brāhmaṇas are of high prosperity and adherents of the path of justice.

Thus (ends) the forty-second Sthāna.

233-236. The next Sthāna is Khala. It is the forty-third one. The Brāhmaṇas born of Vatsa Gotra pursue agricultural avocation. Jñānajā is the goddess of the Gotra. There are five Pravaras: Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jāmadagnya.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family render great service to the Vedic fire. They are dedicated to the study of the Vedas; they are ascetics suppressing their enemies. Hot-tempered, greedy, they are delighted in engaging themselves in Yajña for themselves as well as on behalf of others. They are overwhelmed with compassion for all living beings and they help others.

Thus (ends) the forty-third Sthāna.

237-239. In the Vāsantaḍī village, it is said that the Gotra of the Brāhmaṇas is Kuśa; Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and Audala (are the Pravaras). Goddess Cacāī is glorified as the Gotra-deity.

Those who are born in this family are, as mentioned before, devoted to Brahman. Of helpful nature to others, they act according to the wishes of others. They are averse to other men's wealth and property. They are the exponents of the great path.

Thus (ends) the forty-fourth Sthāna.

240-243. Hereafter it is said that the Saṁsthāna is Jākhāsaṇa. The Gotra is named Vātsya; Śīhurī is the Gotra deity. As revealed (told) to you by me, the Pravaras are five: Bhārgava, Cyavana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Purodhas.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are easy-going and pursuers of happiness. The Brāhmaṇas are stout, well-informed and engaged in all (religious) activities. All of them have faith in Dharma (Virtue) alone. They are the persons solely honoured in all the worlds. They are clever in understanding the meanings of the

Vedic and scriptural texts. They are engaged in performing Yajñas personally for themselves as well as on behalf of others. Handsome and pot-bellied, they are well-behaved and far-sighted. Śīhurī has been glorified as the family deity here.

Thus (ends) the forty-fifth Sthāna.

244-247. The forty-sixth Sthāna has been declared as that of Maṭas (Moḍhas?). Its name is Gotīā. Here the Gotra is Kuśa. There are three Pravaras (of this Gotra viz.): Viśvāmitra the first, Devarātaka the second, and Audala the third. Yakṣiṇī, the destroyer of Rākṣasas, is the deity here.

The Brāhmaṇas who are born here are devoted to Brahman. Their minds and activities centre round Dharma. They are efficient in Dharmaśāstra texts.

Thus (ends) the forty-sixth Sthāna.

248-251. That which is called Varalīyā is glorified as the forty-seventh Saṁsthāna. It is considered extremely sanctifying. Bhāradvāja is the Gotra (of Brāhmaṇas hereof) and Pravaras (as before). Goddess Yakṣiṇī is glorified as the family-deity. Āṅgirasa, Bārhaspatya and the third Bhāradvāja* (are the Pravaras).

The Brāhmaṇas who are born in this family are of sanctified form. Sinners become absolved of sins by the mere words of these Brāhmaṇas as though with water.

Thus (ends) the forty-seventh Sthāna.

252-256. The great Sthāna named Dudhīyā has two Gotras, namely Dhāraṇasa and Āṅgirasaka. Agasti, Dārḍhācyuta and Idhmavāhana are the names of Pravaras of the first Gotra. Chatrāī is the great goddess. Listen to the second (list of) Pravaras: Āṅgirasa, Āṁbarīṣa and the third Yauvanāśva. Jñānadā and Śeṣalā are the bestowers of knowledge to all embodied beings.

O king, the Brāhmaṇas born in this family are unbearable. They are tall and have huge bodies. They are highly arrogant and full of pride. They are awe-inspiring in appearance and black in complexion. They are experts in all scriptural learnings. Voracious in eating, they are wealthy and clever, devoid of hatred and sins.

Thus (ends) the forty-eighth Sthāna.

257-260. I shall explain the Svasthāna well-known as Hāsolāsa. The Gotra here is Śāṇḍilya with five Pravaras, viz. Bhārgava,

*This line (v 250a) should have followed v 249a and 249b should have been 250

Cyayana, Āpnavāna, Aurva and Jāmadagnya. Yakṣiṇī, the sanctifying goddess who destroys sins, is the deity here.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family have stout bodies. They are pot-bellied. Their ears hang loose. These great Brāhmaṇas have long hands. Free from ailments, they are always devoted to Devas and vow of truthfulness.

Thus (ends) the forty-ninth Sthāna.

261-263. The Saṁsthāna named Vaihāla is the fiftieth one. The Gotra is Kuśa and the deity is Mahābalā here.

The Brāhmaṇas born in this family are wicked and of crooked gait (way of life). They are wealthy and established in acts of righteousness. They are masters of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. They are engaged in offering gifts as well as enjoying pleasures. All of them are well-inclined towards the Vedic activities.

Thus (ends) the fiftieth Sthāna.

264-265. Asālā is the great Sthāna with two Pravaras (Gotras), Kuśa and Dhāraṇa. The Pravaras in order are Viśvāmitra, Devarāta and the third Devala (rather Audala). Goddess Jñānajā is glorified as the Gotra-deity.*

Thus (ends) the fifty-first Sthāna.

266-268. The great Sthāna Nālolā is the fifty-second (Sthāna). Vatsa Gotra is well-known; the second is Dhāraṇasa. The Pravaras are as mentioned before. The goddess is also as mentioned before.

Those who are born in this family are considered extremely sanctifying. Of what avail is a verbose description? All the Brāhmaṇas here are very good people. All of them are pure, noble-souled ones. All have good family tradition.

Thus (ends) the fifty-second Sthāna.

269-270. O destroyer of enemies, Dehola is a great Sthāna of Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas thereof are born of Kuśa family, O excellent one among men. The Pravaras are as mentioned before. The deity also has been previously mentioned by me. Brāhmaṇas born in that family possess the qualities mentioned before.

Thus (ends) the fifty-third Sthāna.

271-272. The city of Sohāsīyā is the next Sthāna. There are (Brāhmaṇas of) three Gotras—Bhāradvaja, Khyāta (?) and Vatsa. Yakṣiṇī, Jñānajā and Siholī are the deities in due order. The test of (i.e. the characteristics of) this family is the same as mentioned

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*No mention of the characteristics of Brāhmaṇas hereof is found.

before, O excellent king.

Thus (ends) the fifty-fourth Sthāna.

273-275. I shall describe unto you the fifty-fifth Sthāna now. This Sthāna is known by the name Saṁhāliyā. It was granted formerly by Rāma. The Brāhmaṇas have great spiritual splendour and belong to Kutsa Gotra. They are always devoted to their duty and engaged in ritualistic duties. Āṅgirasa, Āmbarīṣa and the next Yauvanāśva (are the Pravaras). Śāntā is the deity here. She is the giver of peace in the rites of Śānti type.

Thus (ends) the fifty-fifth Sthāna.

276. Thus, O scorcher of enemies, the Gotras, the Sthānas and the Pravaras of the Brāhmaṇas have been recounted.

277. Henceforth I shall mention the Svasthānas of the Traividyas. They will be mentioned by me in due order, O scorcher of enemies.

278-282. The first Sthāna is Śīlā; Maṇḍorā is the second; Evaḍī is the third; Gundarāṇā, the fourth; Kalyāṇiyā, the fifth; Degāmā, the sixth; Nāyakapurā, the seventh; Ḍalīā, the eighth; Kaḍovyā, the ninth; Kohāṭoyā, the tenth; Haraḍīyā, the eleventh; Bhadukīyā, the twelfth; Saṁprāṇāvā, Kandarāvā and Vāsarovā, the thirteenth; Śaraṇḍāvā, the fourteenth; Lolāsaṇa, the fifteenth; Vārolā, the sixteenth; and the seventeenth one as mentioned by me is Nāgalapurā.

Brahmā said:

283-285. The Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas who did not come (at first) came afterwards. Those excellent Brāhmaṇas made their charming residence there. They, numbering twenty-four, approached Hanumān for the purpose of obtaining the letter of authority of Rāma; they returned again. Due to their fault, all of them were displaced and ousted from their Sthānas. After the lapse of some time, they became antagonistic (to one another).

286-291b. They had different codes of conduct, languages and mode of clothing. Out of fifteen thousand Brāhmaṇas, there were some who were engaged in agricultural activities; some were devoted to Yajñas; some became wrestlers; and some chanters of the Vedas. Some pursued the study of *Āyurveda* (Medical Science); some became the performers of Yajña on behalf of washermen. Some regularly had their ablutions and prayers during the Sandhyās; some performed Yajñas on behalf of those who ferment indigo. Some were engaged in (*Yācana* seems to be a misprint for *Yājana*)

performing Yajñas on behalf of thread-makers; and others of weavers etc. There is no doubt about this that at the advent of Kali, Brāhmaṇas will become fallen and depraved.

When Kali sets in, O king, there shall be division in the castes among Śūdras. They also shall be of depraved conduct and subject to the restrictions of castes. They will become abandoned by their own people in regard to eating together and raiment. They will never have contact, as none will marry their daughter.

291c-294a. O king, the Vaiśyas (Merchants) will become oil merchants in Kali Age. Some will be artisans while others will be dealers in rice; some will resort to Princes while others will be dependent on various castes. When it is the advent of Kali, many merchants will be depraved and fallen. Their codes of conduct will be separate, so too will be their relatives. Some of them took their residence in Sītāpura. Some settled at various places on the banks of Sābhramatī river.

294b-300. Those who went away from Sītāpura at first due to fear, those who had settled in Śrīkṣetra on the northern bank of Sābhramatī, went back to Sītāpura, when the Sthāna *Sukhavāsaka* was given to them for residence. On their return they were given the fifty-five villages by Rāma. In them were made the residences of the Moḍha Brāhmaṇas. Those Brāhmaṇas who were excluded from the assignment of means of livelihood, came and settled in Dharmāraṇya. They said, "We have nothing to do with the avocation of the merchants or the assignment of work in the village. But residence here appeals to us." On being told thus, the excellent Traividya Brāhmaṇas permitted those Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas to live in their villages.

The excellent Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas looked after their own activities and were engaged in agricultural operations. They began to take out cows for grazing not far from Dharmāraṇya.

301-305. Many of those Brāhmaṇa boys became cowherds. The Cāturvidya children tended cows. In order to feed them, young maidens and child-widows brought them food and drink and entertained them. After a lapse of some time, O king, they began to love one another. The cowherds lovingly enjoyed the Brāhmaṇa girls and maidens. All of them were found out to be pregnant by the excellent Brāhmaṇas. They were rebuked and expelled from their houses on account of this sinful action. The children born illegitimately were variously called Kātībha, Golakas* and Dhenujas

all over the earth.

306-309. Those Brāhmaṇas excluded from the assignment of means of livelihood, began begging for alms everyday. More may be heard, O king. Some among the Traividya Brāhmaṇas were lepers, some lame, some dull, some deaf, some one-eyed, some hunch-backed and some unable to speak. These people who could not get girls as brides came to the Cāturvidyas. Tempting them with a lot of money, their daughters were taken as brides. O king, the sons born out of these (forced marriages) became known all over the earth as Tridalajas.

310. These Brāhmaṇas born of these inter-caste relations and alliances, somehow continued to make their means of livelihood. Further more, O king, may be heard about these Traividya Brāhmaṇas.

311-313. All the Brāhmaṇas colluded together and offered the village given by Rāma for collection of taxes. They gave up half and preserved half. Those greedy Brāhmaṇas thought that this was an acquisition. Those who were in the Mahāsthāna (? highly placed) became surprised. One Brāhmaṇa among them who was extremely angry spoke these words:

The Brāhmaṇa said:

314-318. These people speak a lot of lies because they are excessively greedy. You are covetous and that will lead to the annihilation of your sons and grandsons. Poison is not the real poison. Brāhmaṇical property is (the real) poison. Poison can kill one alone, but Brāhmaṇical property kills sons and grandsons.

When the sons, wives, houses etc. are burnt on account of (ill-gotten) Brāhmaṇical property, they themselves cannot stand steady because they are assailed by what is called *Brahmasva.*

One who always dishonestly takes away from Brāhmaṇical property, never hopes to get heavenly pleasures.

Even if a Varāṭikā (cowrie) is to be taken away from Brāhmaṇas, the said thief falls in hell for three (successive) generations. The water libation offered by him is never accepted by the Manes (ancestors).

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*The editor notes: Hence some *Golakas* call themselves of (belonging to) the Govardhana caste.

319-320. In the dark fortnight, they never accept his balls of rice and libations. He never gets progeny. If at all he gets, it does not survive. If somehow it survives, it shall be fallen and degraded into bad conduct.

The eleven Brāhmaṇas said:

321. O Brāhmaṇas, no lie has been uttered by us. Why do you find fault with us? Without (commitment of) a fault, harsh words are not proper.

322-326. On hearing this the merchant who bought over the village was called and asked by the Brāhmaṇas.

In frankness, he admitted to the Brāhmaṇas that the tax was offered by the merchants.

On knowing that (the property has been halved), the Brāhmaṇa boys became angry. The eleven Brāhmaṇas were excluded from the means of livelihood. They came to be known all over the three worlds as *Ekādaśasamā Jñāti* (Mere Eleven Kins). No one else has any alliance with them; no marriage relations at all. These Ekādaśasamas live outside the village. Thus there arose different castes and communities among Moḍha Brāhmaṇas in accordance with the turn of events in Kali Age and change of virtue or piety (Dharma).

CHAPTER FORTY

Merit of Listening to the Purāṇa

Nārada said:

1. Tell me, O Brāhmaṇa, what was done by Traividyas after the division into various communities in the city of Moheraka.

Brahmā said:

2. All the Brāhmaṇas in their respective places enjoyed themselves with delighted minds. Some of them were engaged in *Agnihotras* and some in performance of *Yajñas*.

3. Some installed the sacrificial fire; some regularly performed the rites mentioned in the Smṛtis. They were knowers of Nyāya and Purāṇas. They propounded the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

4-6. Those knowers (and expounders) of the Vedas happily followed the code of conduct traditionally observed by *Śiṣṭas*. In this way, while they continued to perform the righteous activities efficiently, the excellent Brāhmaṇas (the leaders of the community) propagated the traditional rituals as proclaimed by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva and incorporated these in the religious texts. They propagated the *Sthānācāras* (special local rituals) and traditions (to be observed by the residents) and *Kulācāras* (special family rituals) and the oracular statements of the presiding deities.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

7. He who performs the *Upāsti* of the written document with "red feet",* should be known as the most excellent one in the community. Thereafter the tribute should be offered.

8-9 Having prepared red sandalpaste, the entire family (story) is written collectively by people with red feet smeared with scents, flowers etc. and that is called *Raktapāda* ('red feet'). All of them should then worship Rāma's charter (letter of authority) with concentration of mind.

10-12.The Brāhmaṇas should always worship the signet ring of Rāma also.

Those who deviated from good conduct by indulging in debauchery etc. should be punished as has been decided by the Brāhmaṇas duly. Without meting out punishment the signet ring-seal is not affixed. As long as the seal is not impressed, the punishment will not be meted. The Brāhmaṇas should be known as possessing the signet ring in the hand, O king.

13-14. When a son is born, the father should offer oblation to Śrīmātā, twenty *Palas*** of ghee and five *Palas* of jaggery. Immediately after the birth of the son, the deity should be worshipped with Kuṁkuma etc. On the sixth day, O king, he should always worship the Ṣaṣṭhī deity.

15-16. There he should offer five oblations along with clarified butter. He should offer oblations consisting of five *Prasthas* (of material) accompanied by cloths and Śrīphalas (coconuts). Worshipping Śrīmātā with Kuṁkuma etc. everything should be offered

* The term is explained in the next two verses.

** A particular measure.

devoutly. For the increase of the progeny in the family, deceitful stringency in regard to the money spent should be avoided.

17-23. What he kept aside to give at the time of prosperity, should be given. The post-natal ceremony should be duly performed after birth.

The wages sanctioned in the case of the Brāhmaṇas is to be divided. Half of the first wage obtained should be kept apart for the Gotra deity. When a son is born, the merchant makes it twice of that. To the Śūdras of Māṇḍalīya this is praiseworthy (? *arkakaram*). To Aḍālajas it shall be threefold and to Gobhujas fourfold. All these that are mentioned and other things as well, are applicable to Śūdras (in general).

If due to fate, the fault of slaying has occurred to anyone, the punishment for the same should be meted out duly by those conversant with the Vedas and scriptural texts.

The dispenser of justice should be an adherent of justice or otherwise he will attribute fault to an innocent one.

He who defiles the row (of leading Brāhmaṇas) shall incur the same sin as one who kills a thousand cows.

It is decided that the sharing of the wages and dispensing of justice should be carried out in the presence of Rāma's Messenger (Hanumān).

24. He should be worshipped at that time or always. His body should be smeared with oil for the destruction of all obstacles.

25. Incense, light and fruit should be offered along with different kinds of flowers. Hanumān worshipped thus, will give him what is desired.

26. In the case of every son, the worship should be in his presence and not anywhere else. The share of Śrīmātā and Bakula Svāmin should be given first.

27a. The acceptance of monetary gifts shall, of course, be done afterwards.

27b-32. When the decision about what is just or unjust is to be made in an assembly of Brāhmaṇas, one should keep in mind the decision (after weighing both sides) and then announce it to the Brāhmaṇas (present) only out of sense of Dharma (justice) and one should (strictly) avoid partiality. Everything acceptable to everyone should be done and that too without any change or modification.

If a Brāhmaṇa summoned in the assembly shows fright, his

words should not be heard to avoid a previous decision. If anyone is banished by (the consensus of) all the Brāhmaṇas getting together, every activity including taking food and drink along with him should be avoided. He should not be given any girl in marriage.

One who associates with him should also be treated like him. Then the punishment acceptable to all the excellent Brāhmaṇas should be meted out to him. Feeding and acceptance of a girl as bride (etc. as before) be continued. This is the view of Rāma.

33-35. If he does, either knowingly or unknowingly, any sinful act to obtain a plot of land, it is as though the sin resides in the food (?). Hence one should avoid the grain produced there. If one accepts it, he shall be a sinner and the punishment to him is to be duly meted out.

If being possessed of strength, one does not see what is just, he should be known as partaker of sin. This is true. There is no doubt about it.

If anyone accepts a bribe from sinful men of wicked deeds, he shall incur all sins. There is no doubt about it.

36-38. Food is not accepted from him, nor his daughter accepted ever as a bride.

He who wants to do what is beneficial to his sons, shall certainly abide by all these regulations and restraints. After writing the document thus the Brāhmaṇas became highly delighted. All of them laid down the just and the righteous rules and regulations after knowing that. In that case, people will not commit sins even when the terrible Kali has set in.

Vyāsa said:

39-40. At the advent of Kali Age, all the Brāhmaṇas shall fall out and be fallen from their positions. They will honour the side of bird-catchers or barbarians. Hence they will become partial.

They will enjoy the villages of barbarous people along with those who kill hogs. In Kali Age the Brāhmaṇas will become estranged and fallen off from the Vedas.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

41-42. The Brāhmaṇas and the Vaiśyas will be going to different countries, O worthy one. By what characteristic sign then can it be known by all (their caste etc.) and the Gotra in which the powerful Brāhmaṇas were born.

Vyāsa said:

43-45. The name of the Gotra in case of some is known through their exploits. There is an *Avaṭaṅka* (? peculiar trait) in the different activities of different persons.

Everything is known through these peculiar traits and not by any other means. O prince, the excellent Moḍha Brāhmaṇas are known through their Gotras, Pravaras and peculiar traits.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

46. From your mouth I have heard about these in respect of their Gotras and Pravaras. Which branch of the Vedas do they study, tell me, O grandfather.

Vyāsa said:

47-53. The Mādhyandinīyas of great power are known as staying in different places. Some Brāhmaṇas of good qualities resort to Kauthumī branch (of Sāmaveda). O highly intelligent one, the branch of Ṛk and Atharvaṇa is extinct.* It is thus that the Brāhmaṇas born of Dharma live now. They are in the Dharmāraṇya forest. Those blessed ones are rich with sons and grandsons. All the blessed Śūdras too are surrounded by sons and grandsons. In the great holy place of Dharmāraṇya all of them serve the Brāhmaṇas. They were devotees of Rāma and they adhere to the behest of Rāma.

The powerful Hanumān follows and obeys the behest with great respect even now, when Kali Age has set in. In invisible form Hanumān walks there everyday where the Traividya and Cāturvidya Brāhmaṇas stay.

Those who are seated in the assembly do commit sins through injustice. But (ultimately) victory is for those who are just and defeat for those who are unjust.

54. If anyone is partial to his guilty son, father or brother, the son of the Wind-god becomes angry with him.

55. The infuriated Hanumān destroys their sons, wealth and abodes.

56. If a Śūdra created for service does not serve Brāhmaṇas, nor does he give the means of sustenance (to them), Hanumān becomes angry with him.

* It means, followers of Ṛgveda and Atharvaṇa Veda were not living in that area at that time.

57. Recalling the words of Rāma, the Son of the Wind-god brings about the destruction of his wealth, sons and position and makes him frightened.

58. Wherever the Brāhmaṇas or the Śūdras be stationed, O excellent king, with Rāma's favour they will never become impoverished.

59-61. If any foolish one of impious soul resorts to sin and heresy, abandons his own Brāhmaṇa kinsmen and honours kinsmen of others (other caste), his merit previously acquired, becomes reduced to ash and not otherwise. He might have made monetary gifts in greater or smaller quantities as ordained by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva formerly, yet the Devas will not accept his *Havya* nor the ancestors his *Kavya*.

62. If anyone denies and deceives his own Brāhmaṇas and makes gifts to others, the merit earned by him in previous births becomes reduced to ash.

63. The Śūdras who become antagonistic to those Brāhmaṇas who were honoured by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva go to the Raurava hell.

64-66. If anyone, out of inconstancy or greed, perpetrates omissions and commissions in the family tradition or Gotra activities and conduct of life, does not follow his own duties and obligations at any time due to delusion, everything pertaining to him becomes ruined and reduced to ash instantly.

Hence all the traditional activities and obligations of the family and those of one's region and Gotra should be maintained in a manner befitting one's own wealth and possession. Thus, O king, the ancient Dharmāraṇya has been described unto you.

67. It was established by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others, the lords of Devas. It was (called) Dharmāraṇya in Kṛtayuga, Satyamandira in Tretā, Vedabhavana in Dvāpara and Moheraka in Kali.

Brahmā said:

68-69. If anyone with great faith listens to the greatness of Dharmāraṇya which is destructive of all sins, all the three types of sins caused by mind, speech and body become destroyed by listening to it or reciting it even once.

70. In order to get all sorts of happiness, a man should listen to the glory (of this Purāṇa) that is conducive to wealth, reputation and longevity and that bequeathes happiness and progeny.

71. By resorting to Dharmāraṇya one obtains that merit which

one derives in all the holy places and sacred waters.

Nārada said:

72-74. The greatness of Dharmāraṇya has been heard from your lotus-like mouth. The greatness of that holy place has been comprehended by me from you, the place wherein Dharma performed a very difficult penance at the holy lake of Dharmavāpī. Hail unto you! I shall now go along with a desire to visit Dharmāraṇya. O Four-faced Lord, I have been sanctified by the torrential flood of your wise speech.

Vyāsa said:

75. Thus, O son of Pāṇḍu, this narrative has been recounted to you in its entirety. On listening to this, a man attains the merit of (gifting) a thousand cows.

76. One without a son obtains a son; a poor man shall be wealthy; a sick one gets relief from ailments; and a bonded man gets released from bondage.

77. A seeker after learning acquires the best of learning that accomplishes great tasks. The merit that one gets from a pilgrimage hereto, is on a par with that of giving away ten million girls as brides.

78. A man or woman who listens to this with devotion, O excellent one among men, will never see a hell along with a hundred and one members of his family.

79-83. O king, the devotee should place the Purāṇa text in an auspicious place, covered with a silk cloth. Pure in mind and body like one honoured by good people, he should duly worship the book with scents and garlands separately.

At the conclusion of the reading of the text, O king, the reader should be honoured duly with monetary gifts etc. for the sake of getting the full merit. He should be given a ring, ear-rings, sacred thread of gold, various kinds of clothes, sweet scents, fragrant flowers etc. After honouring him like a deity, a milch cow should be given.

Thus listening duly to the narrative of Dharmāraṇya one shall certainly get the merit of residing there in Dharmāraṇya.

:: End of Dharmāraṇya-Khaṇḍa ::

Book III: BRĀHMA-KHAṆḌA

Section III: BRĀHMOTTARA-KHAṆḌA

CHAPTER ONE

The Greatness of Pañcākṣara (Five-syllabled) Mantra

Obeisance to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Obeisance to the venerable preceptors. Now begins the *Uttara Khaṇḍa of Brahma-Khaṇḍa.* Om obeisance to Śiva.

1. Obeisance to the quiescent Śiva, the Brahman (Absolute) in the form of the Liṅga, whose form is the eternal flame alone, and who has the faultless knowledge as his eye.

The sages said:

2. O Sūta, the excellent greatness of Viṣṇu has been narrated by you. What is meritorious and destructive of all sins in their entirety, has been succinctly heard by us.

3. Now we wish to hear about the greatness of the enemy of Tripura[1] as well as that of his devotees, (both) destructive of all sins.

4. Further, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, recount in detail the greatness of his Mantras and the powerful efficacy of the devotion unto him as well as of his story.

Sūta said:

5 The highest good of mortals, of a permanent nature, consists in this much alone that devotion to his story is generated (in them) spontaneously, without any ulterior motive.

6. Hence the greatness of a particle of devotion unto him is being described by me. No one is capable of describing it fully, even if he were to have a life-span of a whole Kalpa period.

7. *Japayajña* (the holy sacrifice in the form of repeated ut-

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1. The first two sections of this Khaṇḍa describe the greatness of Viṣṇu (his incarnation as Rāma). To counter-balance it, as it were, the redactor of SkP adds a section on the glory of Śiva.

terance of the sacred name) is proclaimed as greater than all the Yajñas of meritorious nature[1] and cause of excellent welfare.

8. There, at the outset, the benefit of *Japayajña* is (its being) the great means of securing prosperity. Great sages say that the six-syllabled Mantra of Śiva is of divine nature.

9. Just as the Slayer of Tripura is the greatest of all Devas, so also the six-lettered Mantra of Śiva, *oṁ namaḥ śivāya* is the greatest of all Mantras.

10. This five-lettered Mantra (the above Mantra without oṁ) is the bestower of salvation on those who repeatedly mutter it. It is resorted to by all excellent sages desirous of supernatural powers.

11. Even the four-faced Brahmā is not competent to describe the greatness of this Mantra of (five) letters. The Śrutis reach the ultimate principle therein and became fully satisfied.

12. The omniscient perfect Śiva, characterised by existence, knowledge and bliss, revels in the auspicious five-lettered Mantra of Śiva.

13. It is through this greatest Mantra, evolved out of all the Upaniṣads, that all the sages attained the Supreme Brahman, free from all ailments.

14. Through offering obeisance (bowing down) the individual soul becomes one with Śiva, the Supreme Ātman. Hence this Mantra is of the nature of Supreme Brahman.

15. With a desire for the welfare of all embodied ones fettered by the noose of worldly existence, Śiva himself uttered the primordial Mantra *oṁ namaḥ śivāya.*

16. If the Mantra *oṁ namaḥ śivāya* is fixed in the heart, of what avail are many other Mantras, many of the holy places, penances and sacrifices to him?

17. As long as embodied beings do not utter this Mantra even once, so long do they move round and round in the terrible mundane world infested with miseries.

18. This six-syllabled Mantra is the supreme king of the kings of all the Mantras, the crest-jewel of all the Vedāntas, the storehouse of all spiritual knowledge.

19. This Mantra of six-syllables is the illuminating lamp on the path of salvation, the submarine-fire unto the ocean of ignorance, the forest-fire of great woods of heinous sins.

1. *Cf. yajñānāṁ japayajño' smi* / (BG X.25)

20. Hence this five-lettered Mantra is declared as the bestower of everything. It may be practised (muttered) even by women, Śūdras and men of mixed caste and nativity desirous of salvation.

21. There is neither special initiation in regard to this Mantra nor Homa; neither consecration nor water-libation (or other means of propitiation); neither a special occasion nor special process of instruction. This Mantra is ever pure.

22. The set of two letters '*śi va*' accompanied by the word indicating obeisance (i.e. *śivāya namaḥ*) is capable of destroying great sins and granting salvation.

23. What wonder is there if this Mantra taught by a good preceptor and repeated in a sacred place accords immediately every supernatural power desired (by the devotee)!

24. Hence this leader of Mantras should be acquired after resorting to an excellent preceptor, and should be repeatedly muttered in holy places. It gives inordinate powers instantly.

25. Preceptors are free from impurities, quiescent, well-behaved men of few words. They are free from lust and anger. They have control over their sense-organs and their conduct is good.

26. The Mantra mercifully given over by these bears fruits quickly. I shall briefly mention (enumerate) the holy places that are proper for the *Japa* (of this Mantra).

27. Prayāga, Puṣkara, the charming Kedāra, Setubandha, Gokarṇa and Naimiṣāraṇya are conducive to the attainment of Siddhis.

28. In this context, an ancient anecdote is narrated by saintly people; it is conducive to auspiciousness to those who listen to it once or on many occasions.

29-31. At Mathurā, there was a king well-known as Dāśārha,[1] the most excellent one among Yadus. He was intelligent, mighty and enthusiastic. He was brave, conversant with the different scriptural texts and expounder of good policy. He was very courageous and immeasurably brilliant, unassailable and grave, never retreating from battles. He was a great warrior; wielded a great bow. He was an adept in interpreting the different types of sacred texts. He was liberal-minded, youthfully handsome and endowed with all good features.

32. He married the sweet-faced daughter of the King of Kāśī,

1. This is the family-name of the descendants of Daśārha, a great king of Yadu dynasty. The family name is used as a personal name.

named Kalāvatī. She was fully endowed with comeliness, good conduct and auspicious qualities. She was attractive.

33. After the marriage, that eminent king came back to his palace. At night, as she lay down on her bed, he beckoned her for sexual dalliance.

34. Requested and invited by her husband many times, she did not feel inclined and so she did not go near him.

35. When his beloved did not approach him though she was oft-courted for sexual intercourse, the king got up, desirous of taking her by force.

The queen said:

36. Do not touch me, O great king. I know the reason thereof; I am under a vow of observance. You do know what is Dharma and what is Adharma. Do not be rash to me.

37. Learned men do approve enjoyment by a lover on certain occasions. Sexual union increases pleasure, if both husband and wife are equally keen and desirous.

38. You can have union with me when love is aroused in me. What pleasure, what happiness do men get by forcible cohabitation with young women?

39. No man should lustfully approach a displeased woman, a sickly woman, a pregnant one, one who is observing religious fasts and vows, one in her monthly course, and one who is not keen in love-sport.

40. A loving husband should carnally approach his youthful wife after fondling and pleasing her, after a great deal of coaxing and cajoling, and after looking into her requirements with sympathy and smoothness. A man desirous of getting pleasure out of a maiden and a flower should do like this.

41. Though admonished thus by that chaste lady, the king who was overwhelmed with passionate love, dragged her forcibly by the hand and embraced her with a desire to sport with her.

42. Hardly did he touch her, when he found her to be like a heated lump of iron, scorching him. Hence he cast her off in great fright.

The king said:

43. Ha! what a great miracle! O my beloved, this is bewil-

dering. How did your body, tender like a sprout, become red-hot like fire?

44. The king was struck with wonder and fear. The beloved queen smiled modestly and spoke thus with a broad grin.

The queen said:

45. O king! Formerly during my childhood, the eminent sage Durvāsas had kindly imparted to me the five-syllabled *Vidyā* of Śiva.[1]

46. By the efficacy of that Mantra my body has become free from sins and impurities. Sinful persons bereft of good luck, cannot touch me.

47. O king, whores, harlots and other women habitually imbibing liquor are resorted to by you as a matter of course.

48. You do not take bath everyday. Nor do you repeat the Mantra with purity of mind and body. Īśāna is not propitiated by you. How can you be fit to touch me?

The king said:

49. O fair lady of excellent buttocks, initiate me in that splendid five-syllabled *Vidyā* of Śiva. O my beloved, I wish to enjoy you after eliminating all sins through the Vidyā.

The queen replied:

50. I cannot instruct you. You are senior to me. O king, approach the preceptor Garga, the most excellent one among those who know Mantras.

Sūta said:

51. Conversing thus, the couple approached Garga and bowed down to his feet and stood with palms joined together in veneration.

52. Then the king worshipped and revered the preceptor again and again. Humbly he revealed his secret desire.

The king said:

53. With your mind melting with pity, O my preceptor, make

1. This story is found in *Śiva Purāṇa* under Pañcākṣara-Māhātmya (PE 373).

me successful in my endeavour. It behoves you to impart to me the five-syllabled *Vidyā* of Śiva.

54. O preceptor, give unto me that Mantra which will eradicate all those sins committed by me knowingly and unknowingly in the course of my royal duties.

55. On being requested thus by the king, Garga, the eminent Brāhmaṇa, took them to the excellent banks of Kālindī, conducive to great merit.

56-58. The preceptor seated himself at the foot of a sacred tree. The king was asked to observe fast and take the holy bath in the sacred waters. He was asked to sit facing the East, after bowing down to the lotus-like feet of Lord Śiva. The preceptor placed his hand on the king's head and imparted the Mantra of Śiva, auspicious in its characteristics. Due to the retention of that Mantra and to the contact with the hand of the preceptor, hundreds and crores of crows flew out from his body.

59. Their wings were burnt. Then the crows began to scream and fell down on the earth. Thousands of them were seen being reduced to ash.

60. On seeing the flock of crows being burnt, the king and the queen became surprised. They asked the preceptor:

61. "O holy Sir, how did this miracle happen? A flock of crows has been seen coming out of the body. What is this phenomenon? May it be clarified."

Śrī Guru said:

62. O king, there are innumerable heinous sins accumulated over thousands of births you have gone through.

63. What merits had been there in those thousands of births, had preponderated in some cases resulting in births in meritorious species.

64. Similarly, you were born in sinful wombs due to your sins. When the merits and sins were balanced, you were born as man.

65. When the five-lettered *Vidyā* of Śiva entered deep into your heart, crores of sins came out in the form of crows.

66. Crores of sins of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, crores of sins of carnally approaching prohibited women, crores of sins of theft of

gold, imbibing liquor and foeticide and so on, were committed and there were other heaps of sins in the course of thousands and crores of births.

67. When the five-lettered Mantra of Śiva is received and retained, all these became reduced to ash. O eminent king, crores of your sins have become burnt today.

68-71. Now that your soul has become sanctified, you sport about along with this (your wife) happily as you please.

Saying so and concluding the process of instructing the Mantra, he went back to his abode accompanied by the wonder-struck couple. They became delighted; took leave of the preceptor and returned to their palace shining lustrously. Closely embracing his queen now cooled down like sandalpaste, he derived exquisite satisfaction like a penurious wretch after acquiring wealth.

This five-lettered Mantra is an ornamental jewel unto the entire range of Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas and other scriptural texts. It spells destruction of all sins. The excellent power and efficacy of this Mantra has been succinctly recounted by me.

CHAPTER TWO

The Story of Kalmāṣapāda: Greatness of Gokarṇa

Sūta said:

1. Now I shall mention another (instance of the) greatness of the Enemy of Tripura, the mere listening to which immediately annihilates all doubts.

2. There is nothing more powerful than this in eradicating sins, bringing about delight to everyone, glorious and conducive to the acquisition of all desired objects.

3. The ardent propitiation of Maheśa with exclusive devotional fervour, bestows longevity, success, health, enjoyment of worldly pleasures and attainment of salvation.

4. This alone has been indicated as the most excellent atonement for all types of sins, intentional or unintentional, minor or major.

5. Through the excellent ways and means of expiation as pointed out by great sages, it causes the destruction of all those sins that appear to be ever ineradicable.

6. Devout worship of Parameśa causes the greatest prosperity; it has been decisively pointed out in all scriptural texts as the greatest cause of bliss.

7. Whatever and howsoever small an act may be, if dedicated to the Lord, it accords salvation, even if it is performed knowingly or unknowingly and with whatever motive.

8. Rare indeed is the observance of fast on the fourteenth day in the dark half of Māgha. There too, keeping fully awake during the whole of the night is also very difficult (to observe) to men, I think.

9. The viewing of the Śivaliṅga is also very difficult to get. I think, the worship of Parameśvara is still more difficult.

10. Then, the opportunity to worship the Lord with Bilva leaves is obtained only as a result of heaps of merit accumulated in the course of hundreds and crores of births.

11. By worshipping only once (the Liṅga) with Bilva leaves a man obtains that benefit which one acquires by taking holy baths in the waters of Gaṅgā for ten thousand years.

[v.l. for 11:]

Whatever different kinds of sins there be in various Yugas, they are completely annihilated on the fourteenth day in the dark half of Māgha.

12. All those merits lying latent for ages together, stand manifested on the fourteenth day in the dark half of Māgha.

13. The Suras including Brahmā, as well as Vasiṣṭha and other sages praise this fourteenth day in the dark half of Māgha all over the world.

14. A fast observed on this day by anyone, far exceeds hundreds of sacrifices. Keeping awake at night is meritorious and it surpasses the austerities extending over crores of Kalpas.

15. If the worship of Śivaliṅga is performed with even a single Bilva leaf, who can wish for an equivalent of that merit in all the three worlds?

16. In this context a splendid and highly brilliant Gāthā (traditional legend) is being sung. Though it is a great secret, it has been revealed by Gautama out of pity.

17. Born of the Ikṣvāku race, there was a glorious king named

Mitrasaha[1] who was extremely virtuous. He was the most excellent one among all wielders of bow.

18. That king was conversant with the science of all miraculous weapons, well-versed in scriptural texts, master of the Vedas, heroic, highly powerful and ever energetic, an ocean of sympathy and always industrious.

19. His bodily form shone like a mass of merits, an embodiment of all splendour and the centre of all miracles.

20. His heart was full of mercy, his body had glorious brilliance and his feet reflected the rays of the crest-jewels of his vassal kings.

21. Once the lord of the earth who was fond of the game of hunting, entered a terrible forest, surrounded by his great army.

22. There he pierced with his arrows tigers, blue (wild) oxen, deer, stags, hogs, buffaloes and a number of huge lions.

23. Riding in his chariot, in his ardour for the pursuit of the game of hunting, he moved about in the forest well-protected in his coat of mail. It happened that he killed a demon blazing like a huge fire.

24. On seeing this from afar from his hiding place, his (i.e. the demon's) younger brother was overcome with grief. On seeing his brother killed, he pondered over the matter in his mind.

25. 'Indeed this king is my enemy. He is unassailable to the Devas and Rākṣasas too. The only way he could be conquered is through fraud and not otherwise.'

26. Coming to this decision, that evil-intentioned Rākṣasa took a human form and approached the excellent king like the embodied form of an evil phenomenon boding great calamity.

27. He saw the modest and humble figure that approached him with a desire to seek his service. Ignorant of the true nature of things, the great king made him the head-cook.

28. After sporting about for some time in that forest, the king stopped his game of hunting and returned to his city.

29. The queen of the chief of prominent kings was known by the name Madayantī. That chaste lady was dear to him as Damayantī was to Nala.

30. In the meantime, when the day of ancestors (Śrāddha)

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1. This story is found in VR I.70.39-40, Mbh, *Ādi* 175-181 and *Śānti* 234.30. But the story in Mbh, *Ādi* differs in some details from this story in SkP.

arrived, the king invited Vasiṣṭha, an eminent sage, and brought him to his abode.

31. Vegetable and meat dish was placed in front of him mixed with human flesh by the Rākṣasa in the guise of the cook. On seeing this, the preceptor said:

32. "Fie upon you; fie upon you, O king! Human flesh has been presented to me by you, a deceitful rogue. Hence you shall become a Rākṣasa."

33. It was because he did not know that everything was perpetrated by a Rākṣasa. After cursing him the preceptor pondered over it and made the operational period of the curse limited to twelve years.

34. The infuriated king also said thus: "This has not been done by me. Without knowing this, I have been cursed unnecessarily. I shall also curse this preceptor."

35. Saying this, he held water in the hollow of two palms and was about to curse the preceptor. Madayantī (the queen) fell at his feet and prevented him.

36. He then desisted from uttering the curse, giving weightage to her pleadings. He let the water fall over his own feet. The feet turned speckled (black and white in colour).

37. Thereafter, the king became known as Kalmāṣapāda. Due to the curse of his preceptor, he became a Rākṣasa roaming about in the forest.

38. Assuming a terrible demoniac form resembling that of that annihilator Kāla (Time, Death), he swallowed different kinds of animals, human beings etc., in the course of his wanderings through the forest.

39. On one occasion the Death-like demon saw a newly married teen-aged couple of sages, sporting about somewhere in the forest.

40. Distressed due to the curse, that Rākṣasa, habituated to eating human flesh, caught hold of the sage boy and was about to eat him like a tiger devouring a fawn of a deer.

41. On seeing her husband in the clutches of the Rākṣasa, the girl, his frightened wife, cried out piteously trembling with fear.

42-47a. "Oh! Oh! Do not persist in a sinful deed, you the glory of the Solar race. You are a prominent king, the husband of Madayantī and no Rākṣasa.

O lord, do not devour my husband, dear to me more than my

vital breaths. You are the sole refuge unto all distressed people seeking refuge. Of what avail are my cursed vital breaths, as though they are groups of sins, without my noble-souled husband? The very body is a burden unto me. What pleasure is there in this foul body composed of five elements! This quiescent youth, a performer of penance, is conversant with the Vedas and knows many scriptural texts. Hence, by sparing his life, you will be protecting the entire earth. O great king, be kind and merciful towards a Brāhmaṇa's wife, a mere girl. Indeed good people take pity on helpless, miserable and distressed persons."

47b-51. In spite of having been requested by her thus, that man-eating, ruthless, wicked Rākṣasa bit off his head and swallowed the Brāhmaṇa boy. The chaste, emaciated lady lamented at the height of her grief. She gathered together the bones of her husband and made a big funeral pyre. Desirous of following her husband, she wanted to enter the fire. She hurled a missile-like curse at the king in the form of a Rākṣasa: "O sinful king, my husband has been devoured by you. Hence experience the serious ill effects of the curse of a chaste wife. Henceforth if you come into contact with any woman, you will immediately meet with death." After saying this, the chaste lady entered the fire.

52. The king experienced the after-effects of the curse of his preceptor, within the prescribed time limit, and regained his original form. Highly delighted, he went to his own abode.

53. Having come to know of the curse given by the chaste wife of the Brāhmaṇa, the queen checked her husband who was eager to have sexual contact with her, as she was afraid of the eventual widowhood.

54. Childless, that king became disgusted with the pleasures of the kingdom. Discarding the entire glory of royalty, he went back to the forest.

55. For the perpetuation of the Solar line, Vasiṣṭha, the excellent sage, begot of Madayantī, an excellent son.

56. The king who had forsaken the kingdom, began to wander over the entire earth. He saw himself closely followed from behind by a vampire-like being of excessively terrible appearance.

57-58. It was the embodied form of the terrible sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter that could not be warded off (and which hovered round him) ever since the king, in his accursed state, had devoured the son of the sage. Due to his own action mentioned before, the sin

of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter closely followed him from behind. This the king understood from the utterances of eminent sages.

59. Desirous of expiation of her (the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter) the king dejected in his mind, wandered to various holy places for many years.

60-65. In spite of his repeated holy ablutions in holy places, the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter did not turn back. So he went to Mithilā and reached the garden outside the city. He was afflicted with great anxiety. He saw sage Gautama of a heart free from impurities. He appeared like a blazing fire. He was surrounded by an entire host of sages. He appeared like the Sun, the dispeller of thick darkness of clouds. He appeared like the moon undoubtedly shining in white brilliance, as he rose up. He appeared like Maheśvara wearing the digit of the glorious moon. He was quiescent and accompanied by his disciples. He was the sole resort of austerities. Approaching the sage the king bowed down to him again and again. Gautama, the excellent sage, warmly accosted the king born of the Solar race and smilingly spoke to him with love.

Gautama said:

66-68. I hope you are well, O great king. I hope, your position is stable. I hope, the subjects are happy and prosperous and the occupants of your *Antaḥpura* quite well. Why have you come here leaving off the entire royal glory? What are you brooding over? You are heaving sighs and gasping for hot breaths.

The king said:

69. Thanks to your kindness and compassion; all of us are happy. The riches of kings of excellent families are dependent on (the kind blessing of) Brāhmaṇas. But this vampire-like being of terrible appearance harasses me.

70. She is unobserved by others excepting me. She rebukes me at every step. A great sin has been committed by me in my accursed state. Even with thousands of expiatory rites, no mental peace has been acquired.

71. Various kinds of Yajñas have been performed with the entire treasury offered as monetary gifts. All adorable rivers and lakes all over the earth have been made use of for holy ablutions.

All holy places have been traversed by me in the course of my wanderings.

72. All the Mantras have been repeatedly uttered by me; all the deities have been meditated upon, great holy observances and vows have been practised by me subsisting only on leaves, roots and fruits.

73-79. All those things never made me feel at ease. But today, it seems, my birth has become fruitful, because my soul is experiencing a great deal of bliss at your mere sight. The general talk among people that a man seeking (an object) for many years ultimately realizes his wish somewhere, has become true in my case.

It is the outcome of all merits accumulated over many births that Your Holiness, the protector of persons frightened by mundane existence, have come within the range of my sight.

From whence have you come to this place as the remover of fear of worldly existence? I presume that you (expect) rest after having wandered over far off lands and come here. On seeing you I am surprised. From the splendour of your face (I infer) that you are happy. You give delight unto my mind by your love as though through your talk. I have sought refuge in your lotus-like feet after having committed sins. O illustrious one, grant peace unto me whereby I can be happy.

Requested by him earnestly in this manner, Gautama, the storehouse of sympathy, indicated to him the excellent means of atonement for terrible sins.

Gautama said:

80-81. Well! O eminent king! You are blessed. Shake off your fear from great sins. When Śiva is at hand as a protector, where can there be fear for the devotees desirous of refuge. Listen, O great king, O blessed one, there is another well-established holy place.

82. It is Gokarṇa[1] by name, and it destroys great sins. It is

1. A famous sacred place in North Karnataka known for the famous Śiva (Mahābaleśvara) Shrine. But its glorification in this Purāṇa is noteworthy.

charming to the mind. There is no place there for sins greater than the greatest.

83-87. Śiva who destroys all sins if remembered, is present there, just as on the peak of Kailāsa or on the top of the Mandāra tree. In this manner, the residence of Śaṁbhu in the Gokarṇa region, is definite.

Darkness is not removed completely either by fire or by the moon or by big stars and planets as by the appearance of the sun. Immediate purification from sins cannot be achieved through other holy places or sacred shrines pleasing to the mind, as by visiting Gokarṇa. If, even after committing hundreds of sins like Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, a man just enters Gokarṇa once, he need not be afraid of sins anywhere thereafter. All noble-souled ones have acquired peace there through austerities.

88-93a. It is resorted to by Indra, Upendra, Brahmā and others (who are) desirous of supernatural powers.

If a holy observance or vow is practised there even for a day, it is on a par with what is done elsewhere in the course of a hundred thousand years.

With a desire for the welfare of the Devas including Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and others, the Lord is present there himself under the name Mahābala.

That Liṅga was obtained by the Rākṣasa named Rāvaṇa by means of a severe penance. Gaṇanāyaka installed that Liṅga at Gokarṇa. Indra, Brahmā, Mukunda, Viśvedevas, Maruts, Ādityas, Vasus, Aśvinī Devas, the Moon and the Sun—these Devas who move about in their aerial chariots along with their attendants, attend at the eastern gateway of the Trident-bearing Lord of the Devas.

93b-98a. The other gods Mṛtyu himself, Citragupta, Pāvaka (Fire-god) along with Manes and Rudras do attend at the southern gateway.

Varuṇa, the lord of all rivers, along with a number of rivers including Gaṅgā serves the great Lord (resorting to the western doorway).

Vāyu (Wind-god), Kubera, Bhadrakarṇikā, the goddess of gods, along with the Mothers including Caṇḍikā have resorted to the northern gateway.

Viśvāvasu, Citraratha, Citrasena and Mahābala along with the group of Gandharvas worship Lord Mahābala (at Gokarṇa).

Raṁbhā, Ghṛtācī, Menā, Pūrvacitti, Tilottamā, Urvaśī and other celestial damsels dance before Śaṁbhu.

98b-103a. Vasiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, Kaṇva, Viśvāmitra of great austerities, Jaimini, Bharadvāja, Jābāli, Kratu, Aṅgiras and we too—all of us pure Brāhmaṇa-sages attend and adore Lord Mahābala standing all around him, O eminent king.

Atri, along with Marīci, the eminent sages Dakṣa and others, Sanaka and other noble-souled ones attend and worship seated there.

So also sages, Sādhyas wearing deer skin as garments, staff-bearing saints, sages of great vows with shaven heads, Snātakas, religious students, elderly sages having only skin and bone, those who have burnt sins by means of penance serve the Pināka-bearing Lord of the Devas with great devotion.

103b-107. Similarly Devas along with Gandharvas, Pitṛs, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Vidyādharas, Kiṁpuruṣas, Kinnaras, Guhyakas, birds, serpents, vampires, ghosts, Daityas (demons) of great prowess, possessing different types of riches, having different kinds of ornaments and vehicles have surrounded the (Lord) with aerial chariots resembling the Sun, having the refulgent colour of fire and the lustre of the moon. Others resembled clusters of lightning sparks. They eulogize, sing about loudly, recite verses and bow down. In Gokarṇa, O king, they dance delightfully. They get everything they desire and sport about happily.

108. There is no other shrine like Gokarṇa in the whole of the cosmic sphere. It was there that a severe penance was performed by the noble-souled Agastya.

109-114. In the same manner Sanatkumāra, the sons of Priyavrata, Agni the most excellent god, Kandarpa, Goddess Bhadrakālī, the intelligent Śiśumāra, Durmukha, the leading serpent, the serpent named Maṇināga, Ilāvarta and other serpents, the powerful Garuḍa, Rāvaṇa the demon, the demon named Kuṁbhakarṇa and the pious Vibhīṣaṇa performed penance here.

These and other Devas, Siddhas, Dānavas, human beings propitiated Śiva, the Lord of the chiefs of Devas, at Gokarṇa with devotion, after installing thousands of Liṅgas marked with their names. They attained great supernatural powers and established holy shrines. O king, there are abodes of all the Devas here.

115-122. There are the abodes of Viṣṇu, the lord of Devas, Brahmā Parameṣṭhin, the heroic Kārttikeya, the Elephant-faced

Lord, Dharma, Kṣetrapāla and Durgā, O highly intelligent king. There are crores and crores of Śiva-Liṅgas in Gokarṇa. There are innumerable holy shrines at every step. Why speak more? O king, all the stones found lying in Gokarṇa are Śiva-Liṅgas; all the waters holy lakes. The greatness of the Śivaliṅgas and the Tīrthas in Gokarṇa is oft-sung about in the Purāṇas by great sages, O king.

Koṭitīrtha is the most important of all the Tīrthas in Gokarṇa. Of all the Śivaliṅgas, Mahābala is the sole overlord. In Kṛtayuga Mahābala is white; in Tretāyuga he is excessively red; in Dvāpara he is yellow in colour; and will become black in Kali. Though Mahābala has completely overspread the seven Pātālas, he will become soft (even) when the terrible Kali age sets in.

The excellent sacred place Gokarṇa is on the shores of the Western Sea.

123-128a. There is no wonder that it burns the sins like Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. Those who have killed Brāhmaṇas, rogues inimical to all living beings, men devoid of all good qualities, those who are enamoured of other men's wives, men of evil conduct and mode of life, men of evil habits and of miserly character, greedy people, ruthless rogues, foolish, deluded ones, thieves, lascivious persons—all these persons after reaching Gokarṇa have gone to the region of Śaṅkara after taking their holy dips in the sacred waters and visiting Lord Mahābala.

Those who worship Maheśāna there on meritorious lunar days, when the day of the week is auspicious, shall certainly become Rudras.

Whosoever the man may be, whensoever he enters Gokarṇa and worships the Lord, he reaches the region of Brahman.

128b-131. When the new-moon day occurs on Sundays, Mondays or Wednesdays, the devotee should take the holy dip in the ocean, make monetary gifts, offer water-libations to the Manes, worship Śiva, perform Japa, Homa, observance of vows and adoration of Brāhmaṇas—whatever insignificant act is performed shall yield endless benefit.

Worship of Śiva during the astronomical conjunctions like Vyatīpāta, transits of the Sun and Mahāpradoṣa (thirteenth day at dusk) occasions, bestows salvation.

I shall now mention a lunar day bestowing salvation, O king.

132-135. It was on this day that a great hunter attained the great region of Śaṁbhu. The month of Māgha, the meritorious four-

teenth day of dark half, Śivaliṅga and Bilva leaf—the combination of these four is of rare occurrence.

Alas! (How powerful is Māyā) whereby the great Tithi (lunar day) of Śiva is not utilized for fasts by deluded people like the (recitation of) Vedas by dumb ones!

The following are the flight of steps unto men leading to the region of Śiva: observance of fast, keeping holy vigil at night, stay near the great Lord and Gokarṇa. Listen, O king, just now I have come from Gokarṇa.

136-141. On this holy Tithi of Śiva, I observed fast and witnessed the great festival. On this Tithi of Śiva, all are desirous of seeing the great festival. Common people of all the four castes have come from all the countries: Women, old men, boys, men of all the four stages of life—all these came, visited the Lord of Devas and got satisfaction.

These disciples, I and other sages, royal sages, the celestial saints Sanaka and others, have taken holy bath in all the sacred waters and adored attentively Lord Mahābala. We have made our lives fruitful and have gone to different directions. I have come from Gokarṇa as I have now been invited by king Janaka who is about to perform a Yajña. I have returned after seeing something wonderful on the way.[1] My mind is highly delighted and I am fully contented, O lord of the earth.

CHAPTER THREE

The Greatness of Gokarṇa and the Caturdaśī of Śiva

The king said

1. O Brāhmaṇa! What miracle did you witness on the road. Where was it?

Gautama said:

2. While returning from Gokarṇa, O king, at the time of midday, I saw a clear lake in a certain place.

1. This introduces the next chapter on the importance of Mahāśivarātri.

3. Taking ablution therein and rinsing the mouth with the water, I removed my fatigue caused by the travel. Then I resorted to a holy fig tree with thick cool shade.

4-8. There, not very far (from me), I saw an old blind Cāṇḍāla woman who was about to die. She was quite emaciated. Her mouth was dry. Evidently she had had no food and was tormented by many ailments. There were a number of leprous wounds on her limbs festering with worms. Round her waist there was a frayed piece of rag stained with pus and blood. Consumptive pulmonary disease appeared to choke her throat, and she was fully agitated. All her teeth had fallen. She was rolling frequently uttering indistinct (groans). The dust outside, being heated by the hot rays of the sun, had spread all over her body. She had been urinating and sending out excrements involuntarily which smeared her body emitting foul smell and obnoxious odour. Besides she was phlegmatic and gasping for breath. All her nerves ached and she was in great pain. The hairs were dishevelled.

9. On seeing her in such a painful situation, I became overwhelmed with pity. Her death was expected any moment, and I stood there watching.

10. Presently I saw a divine chariot brought there by Śiva's servants. It appeared to sprinkle the celestial path with lustrous rays.

11. In that aerial chariot which was as though a cage of brilliant splendours of the sun, moon and fire, I saw Śiva's attendants resembling the sun.

12-13. They held tridents, skull-topped clubs, axes, shields and swords in their hands. They were adorned with crescent moon; their brilliance was like that of the moon and the white jasmine flower. They shone with crowns and ear-rings and with coils of great serpents. Four such Śiva attendants with splendid characteristics were seen by me.

14. On seeing them rushing along seated in their aerial chariot, I was surprised. I quickly approached them and asked them, even as they were still in the air:

15-17. "Obeisance, obeisance to you, all the best ones among the Devas, the followers of the holy feet of the Three-eyed Lord. You have on you the onerous task of protecting the three worlds (and hence) you bear the tridents, shields and swords and clubs. You have been recognized by me as the followers of Maheśvara's

feet. Is this present advent of yours for the protection of the worlds or a mere pastime?

Or perhaps you are endeavouring for victory over the heaps of sins of all the people. Be kind to me and say to me why you have come over here."

The messengers of Śiva replied:

18. Yonder is seen an old Cāṇḍāla woman about to die. Directed by our Lord himself, we have come here to fetch her.

19. On being told thus by those messengers, I asked them again, as I was struck with wonder. I stood with palms joined in reverence.

20. "How can this fierce, sinful Cāṇḍāla woman deserve to ride on the divine aerial chariot, like a bitch daring to step into the area where holy sacrifices are being conducted?

21. Wherefore do you wish to take this hag of evil conduct to the region of Śiva? She is dirty all over ever since her birth, sinning and closely following the sinful.

22. She has neither the knowledge of Śiva nor has she performed any severe penance. She has no truth and no compassion. How do you wish to take her?

23. How do you wish to take her whose regular food is animal flesh, whose belly is filled with liquor and who is ever engaged in rendering injury to living beings?

24. The Five-syllabled Mantra (*śivāya namaḥ*) has not been recited by her, nor has the worship of Śiva been performed by her. Lord Śambhu has never been meditated upon by her. How do you wish to take her?

25. She has not observed fast on the holy *Tithi* of Śiva (i.e. the fourteenth day of the dark half); she has not worshipped Śiva; she knows nothing of friendship to living beings; no *Bilva* leaf has been dropped by her on Śiva; she has not performed *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta* rites (sacrifices and works of public utility). How do you wish to take her?

26. She has not taken holy baths in Tīrthas; she has not made monetary gifts; she has not observed holy vows. How do you wish to take her?

27. Her sight is to be shunned. Conversation etc. with her is just an impossibility. How do you wish to take her, the shrew

devoid of any association with the good?

28. Has she any meritorious deed to her credit done in a previous birth? How then is she tormented by worms and the vile disease of leprosy?

29. Wonderful indeed is the working of the Lord. It cannot be imagined by embodied beings. Even sinful souls are being taken to the highest region out of pity!"

30. On being pressingly addressed thus by me, the messengers of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas lovingly replied to me, dispelling all my doubts.

The messengers of Śiva said:

31. O Brāhmaṇa, listen, if you have curiosity about this Cāṇḍāla woman with reference to whom you have spoken such words.

32. In her previous birth she was a Brāhmaṇa girl named Sumitrā. She had a countenance rivalling the disc of the moon.

33. She was the daughter of an eminent Brāhmaṇa of the Kekaya land.* Her limbs were characterized by the tenderness of a full-blown jasmine flower.

34. All the people were struck with wonder on seeing her growing up in her parental home like another body of Rati (Kāma's consort) endowed with all characteristic features.

35. Fondled by all the kinsmen lovingly, she grew up day by day and ultimately blossomed into a lovely young woman like the great bow of Smara (god of Love).

36. The virgin was duly given in marriage to a Brāhmaṇa boy by the father along with the kinsmen assembled (there).

37. Having been blessed with a husband in her prime of youth, she continued to be decent in her conduct for some time, happily sporting about in the company of relatives.

38. Then, O sage, after some time, the husband, though a handsome and brilliant youth, was afflicted with some deadly disease and passed away.

39. With her heart excessively distressed with misery at the death of her husband, she spent a few months exercising enough control over her sense-organs and (maintaining) decency in her behaviour.

40. But her youthful state continued to increase day by day,

* A country between Beas and Sutlej—De 98.

making her heart throb with lust.

41. Though guarded by the kinsfolk and admonished by people of pious disposition, that woman overwhelmed by lustful desires failed to control her mind.

42. Utterly overcome by the all-powerful Manmatha (god of Love), the youthful, comely girl, though a widow in fact, became diverted into the path of a paramour.

43. Shrewd that she was, the fact that she was in the clutches of adultery was not known to anyone. That unchaste girl was able to conceal her felony for some time.

44. She began to exhibit the cravings of a pregnant woman. Her nipples became dark in colour. As time passed, all the kinsfolk came to know that she had been defiled by some lascivious fellow.

45-48. Frightened by this, they were extremely worried and excessively pained.

Women come to ruin through lust, Brāhmaṇas through the service unto a mean fellow (or of a low caste), kings due to the punishment of the Brāhmaṇical power, and ascetics by the collection of means of enjoyment. Cooked rice licked by a dog (is good for nothing) and so also milk mixed with liquor. Comely features afflicted with leprosy, and a noble family got ruined by a wanton woman (serve no purpose).

All the brothers of the husband gathered together and pondered. They abandoned her, casting her off from the family. She was caught by the braid of hair and thrown out by all kinsmen, breaking a pot (in token of severance of all connections).

49-51. She went out of the village and was seen by a certain Śūdra. On seeing her as a beautiful woman with heavy protruding breasts, the leader of Śūdra clan took her to his house, consoling the widow with gentle words. Sporting about in her keen desire for sexual dalliance, she moved about along with that Śūdra. She became a virtual crowned queen to him. Dallying with him day and night, she lived somewhere as a housewife. There she regularly ate meat and drank liquor.

52-58. Indulging in sexual sports with the Śūdra she begot a son.

Once her husband had gone somewhere. After imbibing a lot of wine, in a state of excessive inebriation, she craved for a diet of meat. Outside in the cattle shed sheep had been tethered along with cows. In the pitch darkness of the night, she went out holding

a large knife. Being out of senses due to intoxication, she could not distinguish properly. Eager to have some flesh, she killed a cow-calf at night, thinking that it was a sheep, even as it was crying piteously. The wretched woman brought the cow-calf inside. Some merit was lurking somewhere. On recognizing what she had actually done, she became afraid and cried out "Śiva, Śiva". She brooded over it for a while. But that feeling was transient. The desire for meat and liquor prevailed.

Mincing the dead calf, she had the meal she desired. Half the carcass-meat served her purpose. The other half she threw out and deceitfully cried aloud: "Alas, a tiger has pounced upon my dear cow-calf, mauled it and swallowed it."

59. Her loud shout echoed in all the houses. All the Śūdra people crowded into the place.

60-63. On coming to know that a cow-calf had been killed by a tiger, they expressed their sorrow over it. After they had gone, when it dawned, her husband returned home and saw the turmoil therein.

In this manner, much time passed off. That beloved wife of the Śūdra too became a victim of death and reached Yama's abode. Yama reviewed her (record of) activities before and after, reconsidered the first decision of sending her to hell and made her take birth as a Cāṇḍāla girl. Falling from the city of Yama, she entered the womb of a Cāṇḍāla woman.

64-69. Congenitally blind and dark-complexioned like extinguished coals, she was sympathetically nurtured and brought up by her father, a Cāṇḍāla living somewhere. She was fed with dog-licked, foul-smelling, putrefying stuff, unworthy of being eaten. She was given impotable juices and brought up day by day by the mother.

Born blind, after some time in her childhood itself, she became afflicted with leprosy. The excessively wretched girl was not taken in marriage by any Cāṇḍāla boy. After her childhood, her parents too died. Thinking her to be extremely unlucky, kinsmen and brothers too abandoned her. Famished with hunger, the wretched blind girl moved about with a staff in her hand and soiled with lumps of clay. She begged for alms all over the cities.

70-76. She somehow pacified the gastric fire with the balls of rice left as remnant by Cāṇḍālas. Thus bearing a lot of sufferings, major portion of her life passed by. She became old and became

all the more miserable. Without taking food or drink, without even a cloth round her body, she came to know of the long procession of people proceeding (to Gokarṇa) on the occasion of the imminent Śivatithi (the annual festival day of Śiva). The procession consisted of people coming from different countries and regions. There were noble-souled Brāhmaṇas performing Agnihotra. They were accompanied by their womenfolk. There were kings with the members of their *Antaḥpura,* elephants, chariots and horses. The people made a lot of noise, collectively going in their vehicles with umbrellas raised aloft. There were Vaiśyas, Śūdras and other mixed caste people in thousands. As they laughed, sang, danced, ran about, drinking, sniffing, roaming about as they pleased and roared, that procession of men on the move produced a great deal of chaotic sound, as they were going to the Śiva temple at Gokarṇa.

77-86. All the heaven-dwellers were watching with eagerness, seated in their aerial chariots. This Cāṇḍāla woman also keenly desirous of something to eat and cloth to wear, came into the scene slowly, with a view to beg of the laymen there. Clinging to the hands of another (beggar woman) she proceeded ahead thus due to some merit acquired in a previous birth and reached the Gokarṇa shrine. She seated herself a little away from the main road with the palms spread out. In the act of begging frequently, she uttered piteous words.

"Oh people! Take pity on me and offer me something to eat. I have been afflicted for a long time by my sins acquired in the course of many births.

Oh people! Take pity on me; you are the saviours of the excessively distressed; you are the donors of great blessings; you are the doers of many meritorious deeds.

Oh people! Take pity on me, devoid of food to eat and clothes to wear, sleeping on the bare ground and deeply sinking into the vast expanse of dust.

Oh people! Take pity on me, a blind old hag, afflicted with an incurable disease, and distressed by extreme chillness and heat.

Oh people! Take pity on me, burnt acutely by long drawn out starvation, burning all the limbs together with ever increasing gastric fire.

Oh people! Take pity on me, who could never acquire merit in the course of hundreds of births, who is blighted by ill luck and weight of sins."

Even as she was begging thus importunately, a certain kind-hearted meritorious person hurled a Bilva bunch into the out-stretched palms of the Cāṇḍālī.

87. She felt and groped over the bunch that fell into her lap. Finding out that it was not a thing fit for eating, she sadly threw it away.

88. Cast off by her hand in the darkness of the night, the Bilva bunch fortunately fell on the top of a Śivaliṅga.

89-91. On the night of the fourteenth day dedicated to Śiva, she was begging for alms but did not unfortunately get anything from the travellers. She spent the night behind the idol of Bhadrakālī, a little away to the north half the way. When it dawned, she lost all hopes and was overwhelmed with grief. Slowly she turned towards her native land.

92. Famished due to long starvation, she became weary, faltering at every step. Highly distressed and trembling, she lamented much complaining about the many ailments she suffered from.

93. With her naked body burnt by the heat of the sun she, travelling this much distance (land) with a stick in hand (for support), fell down on the earth unconscious.

94. Śaṁbhu, the Lord of the universe, the ocean of nectarine mercy, commanded us to fetch her in our aerial chariots.

95. Thus the story of this Cāṇḍāla woman has been narrated to you and the sympathetic attitude of Śaṁbhu towards distressed people explained.

96. O highly intelligent one, see the way how actions fructify. Even the lowliest of the lowly has ascended the highest region free of illness.

97. In her previous births she had never made any gift of food. Hence in this birth, she suffers from hunger, thirst and the like.

98. Blind with wantonness, she committed a very heinous sin. Due to that evil action, she became congenitally blind in the course of this birth.

99. Even after coming to know that it was cow's calf (that she had killed), she ate it with relish. Due to that evil action, she became a despicable Cāṇḍālī now.

100. She had strayed from the path of the noble and become enthusiastically engaged in the lascivious path of her paramour. Due to that sin, she became unlucky and of evil behaviour.

101. Though a widow, she was overwhelmed with sexual pas-

sion on being embraced by her paramour. Due to that great sin, she is tormented by many bruises and wounds of leprosy.

102. Excessively lustful, she diverted herself in the company of a Śūdra formerly. Due to that sin, she is now afflicted with worms in the putrefying blood.

103. She has not observed sacred vows nor has she performed *Iṣṭa* and *Pūrta*. Due to that sin, she is undergoing distress, bereft of all types of enjoyment.

104. Deluded that she had been, she imbibed liquor in her previous birth. Due to that sin, she is being afflicted with the foul disease of pulmonary consumption and heart-ache.

105. All the signs and symptoms of sins are seen here itself in all men entirely, O tiger among sages, by noble-souled persons of discrimination.

106-110. Those who are seen distressed and afflicted with many diseases, those who have neither wealth nor progeny, those who experience pain due to bad symptoms, beggars without shame, those who are denied amenities of clothes, food, drink, sleep and rest, ornaments, anointing facilities etc., ugly deformed people, illiterate wretches, handicapped persons with defective limbs, ill-fed ones, unfortunate fellows, censurable creatures, those who serve others—all these had been great sinners in their previous births.

After considering all these things, after observing the condition of the people, a sensible man does not commit sins. If he does so, he is the destroyer of his soul. This human body of ours is the means of doing many deeds.

111. One should always indulge in decent and useful activities and shun evil deeds. He who seeks happiness should do meritorious acts and one who wants misery may indulge in sins.

112-122a. If one of these two things is practised, people shall be happy. After gaining this human body that is rarely obtained, he who is desirous of his own welfare, should have recourse to the divinity. A man may commit all sorts of sins always, but if he meditates on Śiva with single-minded attention, he surmounts sinfulness.

In her previous birth, when she died and was brought to Yama's abode, there was a serious doubt (about her) among the members of Yama's assembly. 'Although she was born as a Brāhmaṇa woman, she defiled herself by not observing the conventions of a good family. Hence she has been brought here. Is she to be cast into

the hell or not? Is there any bit of merit in her, achieved at least in her childhood? Still it is better to consider every aspect and then mete out the punishment, not otherwise. After performing meritorious deeds in the course of thousands of births, one gains birth in a Brāhmaṇa family. Hence in many of her previous births, sin has not been committed. Otherwise how do you account for her birth in a good family? It was only in her present birth that she has committed a sin difficult to overcome. Hence too usually she does not deserve being cast into hell. But after killing the cow's calf, or reflecting thereon, she got frightened and uttered the words *Śiva, Śiva*. That was clearly due to a merit acquired in the previous birth. For the destruction of sin, if one utters the auspicious name of Śiva, he shall attain the highest region.

122b-128. Let her experience by turns the fruit of a single serious sin perpetrated in one birth by becoming a Cāṇḍāla woman. What would be a hell unto men worse than this that they are being afflicted with the plethora of many painful features frequently. Birth in a heinously vile family, poverty, great disease, complete delusion—each of these severally is hellish enough. What to speak of them when grouped together? Due to the weight of the merit of a previous birth, the fact that she uttered the name (Śiva), albeit out of helplessness, she will in the next birth perform further meritorious actions. Due to that she will surmount the distresses caused by the numerous sins. Taken by his (Śiva's) men (attendants), she will reach the highest region. We cannot dare to be the chastisers of people of this sort. Let Īśa reflect himself and do what is befitting.'

In the city of Yama, Citragupta and others considered in this m... er and released her; she fell on to the earth.

129-131. At the outset, this woman of unchaste actions uttered Śiva's name out of madness. But that merit led to another meritorious deed of propitiating Śaṁbhu by means of the *Bilva* bunch. At Gokarṇa, on the day of Śiva's Tithi, she kept awake and let fall a Bilva bunch (on a Śivaliṅga) at night. The fruit of this meritorious action without any desire attached thereto, she will experience now itself, even as you watch. It is not an untruth.

Gautama said:

132. After saying thus, those messengers of Śiva pulled out the

atomic soul from the Cāṇḍāla body and endowed it with divine splendour.

133. The delighted servants of Śiva placed in an aerial chariot that lady transmuted into a divine body refulgent with a mass of brilliance.

134-135. In the aerial chariot she shone brilliantly with exquisite, handsome features, with the body resplendent with celestial ornaments, wearing divine apparel, with the body emitting divine fragrance, radiating divine brightness and with a heavenly garland for decoration.

136. She rejoiced with beaming countenance in the midst of the messengers of Śiva with gemset umbrellas, flags etc. held aloft, and accompanied with songs and sounds of musical instruments.

137. Remembering again and again the various births she had undergone, she felt certainly frightened as if she woke up after seeing a wonderful dream.

138. 'Who am I? Who are these supernatural beings of great accomplishment? What is this charming world? Where has my vile, tormented body born of a Cāṇḍāla family gone?

139. Oh! A highly wonderful miracle has been observed arising out of the sportful diversion of Māyā—the fact that I wandered and wandered again and again through thousands of births.

140. Wonderful indeed is the greatness of the worship of Īśvara, inasmuch as he is pleased with even a mere leaf and accords his own region (for it).'

141-142. In this manner, that woman, out of disgust for worldly enjoyments, remembered the feet of the Lord. The servants of Maheśvara took her in the aerial chariot to the vicinity of the great Lord, even as the guardians of the worlds were watching with surprise.

143. O king, thus the miraculous greatness of even the slightest act of devotion unto the Consort of the Daughter of the Mountain, has been narrated. It is destructive of all sins.

The king said:

144. O holy Sir, how is the excellent world of the great Lord? If you have any mercy on me, kindly describe its features.

Gautama said:

145. That is the world of the great Lord where you experience the highest bliss forever—that which is rare in the regions of Brahmā and other chiefs of Devas.

146. That is Parameśvara's world where there is no trace of darkness anywhere and where an all-pervading splendour is well established.

147. That is the world of Lord Śiva which Yogins attain after transcending the functions of the *Guṇas* and from which all of them never fall (back in Saṁsāra).

148. That is Parameśvara's world where anger, greed and the like do not exist, and where there is no state such as birth (,death) etc.

149. It is mentioned as the sole central shrine of all holy scriptural texts. There is no greater wealth than that. It is the region of Parameśvara.

150. Yogins always strive to reach that region by means of Yogic practices such as *Pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of senses from external objects), *Āsana* (posture), *Dhyāna* (meditation), *Prāṇa Saṁyamana* (restraint of breath) etc.

151. That is the world of Parameśvara where the Lord sports always with the Goddess, the embodiment of existence, bliss and pure knowledge.

152. By means of the masses of merits accumulated over many thousands of births, men and women ascend to that place and sport about together.

153. Merged into a mass of splendour, very charming yet very difficult to visualize, (these devotees) do not realize the differentiated state of day and night.

154. That world of the great Lord is inaccessible to a degraded Yogin. It can be achieved only by those who are full of devotion.

155. Only those people attain the region of Śaṅkara and stay there happily, those who are delighted in listening to all living beings and well-established in perfect calmness of mind and senses, and those who have gone beyond the cycle of worldly existence dispelling all delusions.

156. Similarly, you too, O eminent king, go to Gokarṇa, the abode of Giriśa and experience contentment after suppressing all sins.

157-158. There, by taking the holy ablution and adoring Mahābala

on all the occasions, and by observing fast on the fourteenth Tithi of Śiva, with mental concentration, and also by keeping awake at night, all the time adoring Śaṅkara by means of Bilva leaves, you shall be rid of all sins. You will attain Śiva's world.

159. This is the purest advice tendered unto you, O king, by me. Hail unto you! I am going to the city of the ruler of Mithilā.

160. Taking leave of him thus, Sage Gautama gladly went to Mithilā. The king too reached Gokarṇa with a delighted mind.

161. There he visited Mahādeva, worshipped Mahābala. Clearing himself of all sins, he attained the region of Śaṁbhu.

162. He who devoutly listens to this story of Śiva everyday, and makes others listen to it, attains the greatest goal.

163. He who listens to this story only once, but with great faith, shall attain Śiva's world along with twenty-one generations of his family.

164. Thus the story of the Enemy of Manmatha (god of Love) has been entirely narrated. It is the first cause of all welfare and prosperity. It destroys hundreds of sins of worldly existence. It destroys the darkness of delusion. This story is worthy of being sung by the immortal beings. It should always be resorted to by all people aspiring to be happy and well-off.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Importance of Caturadaśī

Sūta said:

1. Again I shall speak of the very wonderful greatness of Śiva. It destroys all the sins of those who listen to it. It extricates one from the noose of worldly ties.

2. Excepting the worship of Śiva, no other raft has been devised (for the saving) of those worldly-minded people sinking down in the ocean of sins that cannot be easily crossed.

3. A wise man should always perform the worship of Śiva. If he himself is physically incapable of worshipping, he should watch with his mind full of humility and devotion a worship that is being conducted.

4. If a man were to perform Śiva's worship capable of according salvation, albeit he may be deficient in faith, or even witness one (worshipping Śiva), he shall go to the highest region in due course.

5. There was a king named Vimardana in the Kirāta country. He was heroic, extremely unassailable. He was endowed with valour and had vanquished his enemies.

6. He was always fond of the game of hunting. He was a ruthless, miserable wretch with brutish might. Habituated to eat all types of meat, he was cruel in temperament. He had women of all castes around him.

7. Still he regularly performed the worship of Śaṁbhu carefully, particularly on the fourteenth day of the lunar month in the dark or bright half.

8. He used to rejoice after performing the adoration profusely with all requisite adjuncts. With great delight he used to dance, eulogize and sing.

9. His crowned queen was much distressed at this activity of the king, indiscriminately eating everything and doing all sorts of wicked deeds in this manner.

10. The queen named Kumudvatī was endowed with good qualities and decent behaviour. Once she approached him and asked him confidentially:

11-12. "O king, this behaviour of yours is a cause of great surprise. What a great disparity there is between your misdemeanour and your devotion to Parameśvara! You indiscriminately eat everything irrespective of time. You are running after women of every type. You indulge in every type of violent, ruthless injury to others. How do you have devotion to the Lord?"

13. On being asked thus, the king who was capable of knowing the events of the three divisions of time (past, present and future), deeply considered every aspect for some time, and then laughingly said thus, with interest and curiosity.

14. The king said: "O lady of excellent countenance, I was a dog in my previous birth. I used to roam about all round the city of Paṁpā.

15. As time passed on thus in that excellent city, once I went to a beautiful temple of Śiva.

16. On the great Caturdaśī day, the worship was being conducted and I watched the same from afar, from the external gate.

17. Infuriated men with stout sticks made me run away from that place to save my life.

18. I went round the charming temple of Śiva clockwise and came back once again to the doorway where I was obstructed once again.

19. Again I circumambulated the same temple of Śiva. Tempted by the balls of rice etc. offered as oblation, I reached the gateway once again.

20. Thus making circumambulation round and round, whenever I took rest at the gateway, they shot me with sharp arrows.

21. Wounded in the body, I lost my life at the portals of the temple of Śiva. Thanks to the power of Śiva's proximity, I am now born in a royal palace.

22. Having witnessed the adoration on the Caturdaśī day, I could see the rows of lighted lamps. Due to that merit, O beautiful lady, I became a knower of the events of the three divisions of time (past, present and future).

23. Due to the impressions of the experiences of the previous births I have become an eater of all sorts of foodstuffs. Natural propensity formed of previous experience is irresistible in the case of even learned men.

24. Hence I worship the Lord, the preceptor of the universe, on the Caturdaśī day. O fair lady, you also should faithfully worship the Pināka-wielding Lord."

The queen said:

25. O eminent king, with the favour of the Consort of the Daughter of the Mountain, you became a knower of past, present and future. It behoves you to narrate the events of my past life exactly.

The king said:

26. You were a dove in the previous birth. Once while flying through the sky, you got a piece of meat by chance.

27. A powerful vulture who could not get any meat saw the piece of flesh in your grasp. Hence that terrible bird rushed at you.

28. Seeing him, O lady of fair countenence, you fled in fright, followed by him with a desire to snatch the piece of meat from you.

29. Fortunately you reached Śrīgiri (Mt. Śrīśaila) and exhausted completely circumambulated the temple of Śiva and perched on the top of the flagstaff.

30. The other bird of sharp beak quickly chased you, killed you, making you fall down, and went away seizing the piece of meat.

31. Due to the circumambulation of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas, and falling dead in front of him, you were born as a princess.

The queen said:

32-48. (*Details of the forthcoming seven births*)

Details of the previous birth have been heard by me entirely. It is really wonderful. My devotion is aroused. O highly intelligent king conversant with the events of the three times, I wish to hear another thing. Where will we go after leaving off this body?

The king said:

In the next birth, I will be born as king of Sindhu country. Born as the princess of Sṛñjaya king, you will attain me in marriage.

In the third birth, I shall become king in Saurāṣṭra. As the princess of Kaliṅga king, you will become my wife.

In the fourth birth, I will become king of Gandhāra. Then you shall be my wife as the princess of Magadha.

In the fifth birth I will be king of Avantī. You will be my beloved as the princess of Daśārha king.

In the sixth birth I will become king in Ānarta. You will be the princess born of Yayāti family and will come to me again.

In the seventh birth, I shall be prince of Pāṇḍya. As regards handsomeness, liberal-mindedness and other good qualities, there will not be anyone else on a par with me. I will be conversant with the principles of all scriptural texts, and shall be mighty and valorous. I will be endowed with all good characteristics and be charming unto all the people. I will be well-known as Padmavarṇa, having the lustre of the sun, the friend of lotus.

You will be born as princess of Vidarbha unrivalled in beauty all over the earth. Your name will be Vasumatī and you will be beautiful in all form and proportionate in limbs. Giving delight to the eyes and minds of all the princes, you will be discarding

everyone and woo me as your suitor like Damayantī selecting Naiṣadha (Nala). I will be vanquishing all the kings and gaining you as my excellent-complexioned wife.

Firmly established in my own country, I will enjoy all pleasures for many many years. I will perform different kinds of Yajñas of splendid type, such as horse-sacrifice etc. I will be duly offering water libations to the Manes, Devas and the Sages; be propitiating excellent Brāhmaṇas with monetary gifts and be worshipping Śaṅkara, the Lord of the chiefs of Devas, the benefactor of the world.

I will entrust the burden of the kingdom to my son and will go to forest for performing penance. I will obtain the knowledge of Brahman from Agastya, the excellent sage. Along with you I will attain the highest region of Śiva.

It is by means of this worship of Śaṅkara on every Caturdaśī day, O lady of fair face, that I will retain the status of a king during seven successive births. This merit has been acquired merely by watching the adoration (of Śiva). Where is a wicked-souled dog and where is such a good goal as this? (Oh, what a difference!)

Sūta said:

49-51. On being told thus by her husband, that queen of splendid features became struck with wonder. She joyously worshipped him. The king too enjoyed all pleasures as much as he desired along with her and attained the highest region of Śaṁbhu at the end of the seventh birth.

He who listens to this greatness of the worship of Śiva, that makes one wonder, and he who glorifies this shall attain the highest region.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Story of a Gopakumāra

Sūta said:

1. Śiva is the preceptor. Śiva is the lord. Śiva is a kinsman unto embodied beings. Śiva is the soul. Śiva is the individual soul.

There is nothing else other than Śiva.

2. This is a final decision in all the scriptural texts that whatever is given, thought and offered into the fire with Śiva in view, is of infinite merit.

3. A leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water offered unto Śaṁbhu, even if it be so small and insignificant, is capable of being infinite in merit.

4. Leaving off all other rituals and religious practices, even if they be ordained by scriptural texts, he who worships Śiva alone, is rid of all bondage.

5. There is no wonder that if the love that one has for one's son, wife, wealth and property is diverted to the worship of Śiva, it does save one.

6. Hence some noble-souled devotees shun completely the intoxicating beverage of mundane pleasures for the sake of Śiva worship. They even cast off their bodies which is usually very difficult to do.

7. That is the real tongue which eulogizes Śiva; that mind is so (i.e. real mind) if it meditates on Śiva; those ears are the real ones that are eager to listen to his stories and the hands are so (real hands) if they worship him.

8. Those are the real eyes that watch the worship of Śiva, the head that bows down to Śiva and those feet which walk devoutly to the shrine of Śiva (are real head and feet).

9. He whose organs of sense and action are engaged in acts devoted to Śiva crosses the ocean of worldly existence and achieves salvation as well as enjoyment of worldly pleasures.

10. A man endowed with devotion to Śiva, may be a Cāṇḍāla or Pulkasa (a tribal caste), a devotee of Śiva, whether a man or a woman or even a eunuch, immediately gets freed from mundane existence.

11. Of what avail is nobility of birth? Of what avail are the conventional rites and rituals? Of what avail are good qualities and decent habits? A person endowed with even a modicum of devotion to Śaṁbhu is worthy of being revered by all embodied beings.

12. At Ujjayinī there was a king named Candrasena who appeared like a second Indra in the form of a man.

13. The excellent king Candrasena devoutly worships Parameśvara residing in that city as Mahākāla.

14. Maṇibhadra, the foremost among attendants of Śiva, who had subdued all those things antagonistic to welfare (of men) and who was bowed down to by all the worlds, became a friend of that king.

15. Maṇibhadra, a highly intelligent follower of Śaṅkara, once became extremely pleased with the king and gave him a divine Cintāmaṇi jewel.

16. That jewel, resplendent like the sun and refulgent like Kaustubha, bestows everything a man wishes on being seen, heard about or meditated upon.

17. A piece of brass, copper, iron, tin, stone or any other thing when brought into contact with a modicum of its splendour becomes gold in a trice.

18. Wearing that Cintāmaṇi jewel round his neck, the king attended his court. He shone like the Sun amidst Devas.

19. On hearing that this king always had the Cintāmaṇi round his neck, the greed of other kings increased and all of them became agitated in their hearts.

20. Ignorant of the fact that it was the good fortune of the king whereby he acquired the jewel, the other kings became jealous. Some of them affectionately requested him and some arrogant fellows stubbornly demanded it from him.

21. When the pleading requests of all the kings were turned down by this king, the kings of all the realms joined hands together (against him).

22-23. Saurāṣṭras, Kaikayas, Śālvas, Kaliṅgas, Śakas, Madrakas, Pāñcālas, Āvanti people, Sauvīras, Magadhas, Matsyas and Sṛñjayas[1]— these and other kings along with their horses, chariots and elephants energetically attempted to vanquish Candrasena in battle.

24. Excessively infuriated, they rallied together large armies, shook the entire earth and laid siege to Ujjayinī at all its four city gates.

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1. According to De, the following are the modern names of the invading states: Surāṣṭra (Kathiawad, Gujarat), Kekaya (the country between Beas and Sutlej), Kaliṅga (a part of Orissa), Madra (the country in Panjab between Ravi and Chenab), Pāñcāla (Rohilkhanda), Avantī (Malwa, now in Madhya Pradesh), Sauvīra (Upper Sindh), Magadha (South Bihar), Matsya (the territory of former Jaipur, Alwar and some part of Bhāratpur states, now a part of Rajasthan).

Śakas and Sṛñjayas are names of tribes.

25. On seeing that his city was besieged by the insolent kings, Candrasena sought refuge only in Mahākāla.

26. Without hesitation and being steadfast in his resolve, that king eschewed all food and worshipped the Lord of Gaurī day and night, without his intellect swerving astray to other thoughts.

27. In the meantime, a cowherdess of that city, a widow with an only son, was there nearly for a long time.

28. Carrying the five-year old boy, the widow was watching the great adoration performed by the king to the Consort of the Daughter of the Mountain.

29. After seeing the wonderful festivities of Śiva's worship, the woman bowed down and returned to her camp.

30. The cowherd lad who was watching the entire process, himself began to perform eagerly the worship of Śiva that bestows non-attachment (to worldly affairs).

31. He brought a beautiful stone and placed it in a vacant excellent tent not far from his own tent and considered it Śiva Liṅga.

32. He bought all kinds of flowers that he could lay his hands on, bathed the Liṅga and worshipped devoutly.

33. He artificially improvised sweet scents, ornaments, garments, incense, light, raw rice grains etc. and made provision for *Naivedya* (food offerings) also.

34. Again and again he worshipped with charming flowers and leaves, danced in diverse manner and bowed down repeatedly.

35. While the son went on like this performing the worship of Śiva with full mental concentration, the cowherdess lovingly invited him to take his food.

36. Though called by his mother many times, the boy continued to be engrossed in the worship and was not at all interested in having his food. Then the mother herself went there.

37. On seeing the son seated in front of the Śiva Liṅga with closed eyes, the mother pulled him by his hands and hit him.

38. Though pulled and beaten, the boy did not move. So the woman hurled the Liṅga far off and destroyed the other objects of worship.

39. She rebuked the boy despite his cries of protest, "Alas! Alas!". Then she went back to her house in a huff.

40. On seeing the (materials of) worship spoiled by his mother (intended by him to be dedicated) to the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas, the boy fell down crying, "Oh lord! Oh lord!"

41. His eyes filled with tears and he fell senseless. After a short while, he regained consciousness and opened his eyes.

42. Then suddenly, the tent became converted into a temple of Śiva shining with gemset columns, with festoons hung over golden doorways and having a pure altar of very valuable blue diamond.

43. The boy saw a fine pleasing temple of Śiva and a gemset Liṅga in the middle of an excellent pedestal. The roof was resplendent with crystals and domes of various sorts made of molten gold.

44. On seeing this, he got up suddenly overcome with awe and dismay in his mind. Out of contentment, he was as though sinking deep into the ocean of great pleasure.

45. As a result, he realized the greatness of Śiva worship and prostrated flat on the ground for quelling his mother's sin:

46-47. "O Lord, O Consort of Umā, forgive my mother's sin. She is ignorant of your greatness. She is deluded. Be pleased with her, O Śaṅkara. If there is a modicum of merit in me arising out of my devotion to you, O Lord Śiva, may my mother get your sympathy thereby."

48. Thus propitiating Lord Śiva and bowing down repeatedly, the boy went out of the temple of Śiva when the sun set.

49. He found his own tent resembling the city of Indra. It was suddenly converted into a golden abode shining with riches of all sorts.

50-51. At night he joyously entered the house spread over with valuable jewels and shining with heaps of gold. There he saw his mother lying down secure and unworried on a white bed on a gemset couch.

52. She appeared like a celestial damsel with her limbs brightened with gems and ornaments, resplendent with divine garments and endowed with divine features.

53. He made her get up quickly with his wide open eyes indicating his excitement, "Mother, welfare unto you, get up. See this wonderful thing."

54. On being wakened up thus by the noble-souled son, the mother shone with a coronet and glanced around smilingly.

55. Fully excited, she got up and saw everything as though unprecedented and new including both her own self and her son.

56-60. She saw her own abode anew. Her pleasure increased

on hearing from her son the favour of the Lord of the Daughter of the Mountain. She informed the king who too was worshipping Lord Śiva continuously. After concluding his routine adoration, the king came to their abode at night and saw the wonderful act of the cowherd-lad arising from Śiva's pleasure. He saw the temple made of gold and the Liṅga made of jewels and the abode of the cowherdess shining with *Māṇikya* stones (Rubies).

On seeing all this in the company of his ministers and preceptor, the king was struck with wonder and became highly pleased. He shed tears of joy and love and embraced the boy.

61. Due to the glorification of Śiva and the amazing miracle and also the excitement among the citizens that night appeared to be like a moment (in duration).

62. When the day dawned, the kings who continued besieging the city, heard about this miracle through their spies.

63. The kings were greatly dismayed. Quickly they abandoned the inimical posture. They laid down their arms and entered the city on being permitted by Candrasena.

64. After entering the beautiful city and bowing down to Mahākāla, all those kings went to the abode of that cowherdess.

65. Candrasena advanced to receive them there and duly honoured them. Occupying valuable seats of honour offered to them, those kings were pleased and struck with wonder.

66. On seeing the temple of Śiva that manifested itself for blessing the cowherd-lad as well as the Liṅga of majestic appearance, they turned their mind towards Śiva.

67-68. All those delighted kings gave garments, gold, jewels, cows, buffaloes and monetary gifts, elephants, horses, chariots, umbrellas, vehicles and other paraphernalia made of gold as well as male servants, female servants and many other things, desiring to secure the grace of Śiva.

69. All the kings made that lad the king and leader of all cowherds wherever they lived.

70. In the meantime, the brilliant Hanumān, the lord of monkeys, appeared there honoured and adored by all the Devas.

71. Due to his arrival, all the kings became agitated and dismayed. They stood up to receive him and bowed down humbly.

72. Seated amidst them, the honoured lord of monkeys embraced the cowherd lad and spoke, addressing the kings:

73-77. "O ye all, listen, O kings and other embodied beings,

welfare unto ye all. Excepting the worship of Śiva, there is no other means of salvation unto the embodied ones.

Fortunately this cowherd boy worshipped, albeit without the requisite Mantra, Śiva on Saturday, at dusk (coinciding with the thirteenth lunar Tithi) and acquired welfare.

Pradoṣa on a Saturday is rare indeed unto all embodied beings. That too during the dark fortnight is rarer still.

This boy who has enhanced the reputation of cowherds, is indeed extremely meritorious. In his eighth future generation, the famous Nanda will be born.[1] Nārāyaṇa himself will be his son named Kṛṣṇa.

From now onwards this cowherd lad will become well-known in the world by the name Śrīkara."

Sūta said:

78. After saying this and imparting Śaiva rituals to the cowherd boy, the son of Añjanā vanished there itself.

79. All those kings duly honoured became delighted and satisfied. They took leave of Candrasena and returned to their respective places.

80. The highly brilliant Śrīkara, after being taught by Hanumān, performed the worship of Śaṁbhu along with Brāhmaṇas conversant with religious practices.

81. In due course Śrīkara as well as King Candrasena propitiated Śiva duly and devoutly and attained the highest region.

82. Thus the secret narrative has been told. It is very sacred. It is conducive to fame. It increases merit, splendour and prosperity. It annihilates sins. It increases devotion to the feet of the Lord of Gaurī.

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1. This explains why Nanda became the guardian of Kṛṣṇa during his stay at Gokula. Such a motif of using some incident in the previous birth to explain the incident in the present birth was popular in Purāṇas, Buddhist Jātaka Tales and Jaina story literature. Many stories in this Purāṇa have used this motif.

CHAPTER SIX

The Importance of Pradoṣa

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, the legend that has been narrated by you is great and wonderful. It shows the greatness of Śaṁbhu and is destructive of all sins. We wish to hear it once again, with more mental alertness and attention.

What power does Lord Śaṁbhu grant on being adored at Pradoṣa time by great souls. O virtuous one, speak this to us. Though oft heard by us, O Sūta, our desire goes on increasing.

Sūta said:

4. Well asked by you, O highly wise ones, you are well-known all over the world. Hence I shall narrate fully the great merit accruing from Śiva's worship.

5. The dusk on the thirteenth lunar day is called *Pradoṣa.*[1] The Great Lord and none else should be worshipped then by those who seek benefits.

6. Who is competent to describe the greatness of the worship at the time of Pradoṣa? It is at that time that all the Devas stay near Giriśa (Śiva).

7. At the time of Pradoṣa, the Lord in his silver abode of Kailāsa, performs dances even as he is eulogized by the Devas revealing his good qualities.

8. Hence, *Pūjā* (worship), *Japa, Homa*, narration of his stories and eulogies of his good qualities should invariably be carried on by men desirous of the four benefits (viz. that of virtue, wealth, love and liberation).

9. It is the holy raft that shows the other bank (of the ocean of Saṁsāra) to those who get sunk in the ocean of worldly existence, to the men blinded by the darkness of penury and afraid of mundane existence (and worries).

10. To those who are distressed due to misery, grief and fear, to those who wish for the annihilation of all troubles, the worship of the Lord of Pārvatī at the time of Pradoṣa is the way to prosperity.

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1. VV 5-14 describe the importance of *Pradoṣa-Vrata.*

11. Even an evil-intentioned mean fellow, a man deficient in luck, or even a rogue becomes free from adversities by worshipping the Lord of Devas.

12-13. One who is being struck down by enemies, bitten by serpents, assailed by mountains, fallen into the great ocean, one who is struck with Kāla's baton, attacked by many diseases simultaneously: none of these men becomes destroyed, if he worships Giriśa at the time of Pradoṣa.

14. By worshipping Śiva, one shakes off poverty, death, misery, and the weight of debts amounting to a huge mountain and is honoured with riches.

15. In this context I shall recount an ancient *Itihāsa* (legend) of great merit, on hearing which all men have their objects accomplished.

16. In the Vidarbha country, there was a king named Satyaratha. He was courageous, of truthful words and strict adherent of all religious rituals and observances. His habits were decent.

17. Ruling virtuously over the kingdom, O eminent sages, that highly intelligent king passed a long period of time very happily.

18. The kings of Śālva with Durmarṣaṇa as their leader were the powerful enemies of this king.

19. Once, rallying together a large groups of armies, these Śālvas reached the city of Vidarbha in their desire to conquer it and laid siege to it.

20. On seeing his own city thus besieged, the ruler of Vidarbha marched against them promptly to fight with a big army to aid him.

21. His battle with the Śālvas who were extremely arrogant due to their prowess, was like that of the serpent king in Pātāla against the proud Gandharvas.

22. Then the king of Vidarbha fought a terrible battle, but ultimately he was killed in the battlefield by the Śālvas who lost much of their own armies.

23. When that great warrior of heroic might was killed along with the ministers, the soldiers who survived the general massacre fled from the field excessively shattered.

24-25. The battle came to an end; the ministers of the enemies shouted joyously; there was a tumultuous sound of combatants in the city. At that time, the chaste wife of the ruler of Vidarbha, came out with very great difficulty, utterly shattered with grief.

26. She was pregnant. In the darkness of the night, the queen, in her excessive grief, proceeded towards the West.

27. Even after daybreak, the chaste lady went along the path very slowly. After traversing a long distance, she saw a lake free from impurities.

28. Distressed by the increasing heat of the day, the beautiful woman resorted to a lush and luxuriant shady tree on the banks of the lake.

29. As fate would have it, in that lonely spot, on the paved platform around a tree, the chaste lady gave birth to a son in an auspicious Muhūrta.

30. The queen was overwhelmed with thirst; she entered the lake; but the lady of tender limbs was seized by a crocodile.

31. The new-born child, rendered an orphan by the death of father and mother, cried piteously on the banks of the lake, feeble and distressed with hunger and thirst.

32. When that new-born child was crying thus, a Brāhmaṇa lady chanced to come there all of a sudden.

33. She had a one-year-old son with her. Widowed and penniless, she had to go a-begging door to door.

34. That Brāhmaṇa lady, Umā by name, having no kinsmen except her only son, having recourse to the path of beggary, saw the prince.

35. On seeing the prince who appeared like the solar disc fallen (from the sky) crying helplessly, the lady thought at length thus:

36-39. 'A great miracle has been seen by me now. This infant has not yet got the umbilical cord cut. Where has its mother gone? Has he no father? Has it no other kinsmen? Alas! This pitiably helpless boy is lying on the bare ground.

Is this a Cāṇḍāla-born child? One born of a Śūdra? Of a Vaiśya? Is he the son of a Brāhmaṇa? Or of a king? How is this to be known about the child?

I would rather take up this infant and nourish it like my own bosom-born child. But I dare not touch him, because his parentage is not known.'

40-42. As the Brāhmaṇa lady was pondering thus, a certain mendicant, the veritable Lord Śiva himself, came there. The excellent mendicant told her: "O Brāhmaṇa lady, do not be upset. O lady of fair eyebrows, guard and nurse him without the least

bit of hesitation. Ere long you will attain great welfare through this child."

43-45. Having said this much, the sympathetic mendicant (of Kāruṇika sect?) went away hurriedly.

When the mendicant had gone, the Brāhmaṇa lady confidently took the child to her own house. Having full confidence in the words of the mendicant, that chaste lady brought up the prince too like her own son, with loving care. She settled down in her house in the beautiful village named Ekacakra.*

46-49. She brought up her own son and the prince by means of the alms she procured. The Brāhmaṇa lady's son and the prince were consecrated by Brāhmaṇas. They grew up duly honoured by others. At the proper time, they were invested with the sacred thread. The boys strictly observed all religious rites and conventions. Everyday they walked round for the purpose of alms along with their mother.

Once, in the course of her begging round along with the boys, the Brāhmaṇa lady happened to enter a temple. The temple was full of elderly sages. Seeing the boys the wise sage Śāṇḍilya said:

50-55. "Ha! Wonderful indeed is the might of fate! Ha! The power of Karma is irresitible. This boy is dependent on another boy's mother and sustains himself by means of alms. Considering this excellent Brāhmaṇa lady as his mother, he has adopted a Brāhmaṇical way of life along with the Brāhmaṇa's boy."

On hearing these words of Sage Śāṇḍilya, that Brāhmaṇa lady bowed down (to him) in the assembly, and asked with unconcealed surprise: "O Brāhmaṇa, this boy was brought home by me at the instance of a mendicant. Though I am unable to trace down his antecedents till today, I am bringing him up like my own son. In which family is he born? Who is his mother? Who is his father? I wish to know everything from you, endowed with the eye of wisdom."

56. On being asked thus by the Brāhmaṇa lady, the sage endowed with the vision of superhuman knowledge narrated to her the details of his birth and early life.

57. He narrated in detail that he was the son of the king of Vidarbha, and that the father was killed in battle and the mother was carried away by a crocodile.

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* Mod. Chakarnagar, 16 miles south-west of Itawah—De 59.

58-60. That lady whose surprise and curiosity was kindled, again asked the sage, "How did the king die in battle, thereby forgoing all worldly enjoyments? O great sage, how did this boy come to face penury? How will he shake off his poverty and regain his kingdom?

It behoves you to instruct me the means of getting rid of poverty of this boy as well as of my son, who now maintain themselves by means of the alms received by begging."

Śāṇḍilya said:

61. That king of Vidarbha,[1] this boy's father, was the excellent king ruling Pāṇḍya kingdom in his previous birth.

62. Conversant with all pious rituals, the king, ruling the entire earth, once worshipped Śaṁbhu at the time of Pradoṣa.

63-68. Even as he was devoutly worshipping the Lord of the three worlds, there was a tumultuous sound all over the city.

Suspecting that there was some revolt in his city on hearing the loud report, the king ceased to proceed with the adoration and came out of the palace.

In the meantime, his mighty minister captured the vassal king who attacked him as an enemy, and approached the king. On seeing his enemy, the haughty vassal king brought near him by the minister, the king became angry and asked his head to be cut off. Further, the king had stopped the worship of Śiva in the middle, and without formally concluding his routine observances, took food at night. His son too, in the height of his arrogance, deluded that he was, did the very same mistake. Without worshipping Śiva at the time of Pradoṣa, he took food and went to sleep.

69. In his next birth that king became the ruler of Vidarbha. In view of this interruption in his adoration of Śiva, he was killed by his enemies even as he was having worldly enjoyment.

70. His son in the previous birth became again his son in the present birth. He had to face poverty because of the violation of the rules of procedure in the worship of Śiva.

71. In her previous births, his mother had fraudulently killed her co-wife. Due to that great sin, she was seized by a crocodile

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1. The motif of rebirth is used to explain the disastrous results of omission of Śiva-worship.

in the present birth.

72. These are the details of the acts of the persons concerned and have thus been conveyed to you. Men guilty of non-performance of the worship of Śiva attain poverty.

73. I am speaking the truth. I am speaking what is conducive to the welfare in the other world. I am speaking the essence of all the Upaniṣads. The turmoil of worldly existence is actually insignificant. There, the significant essence is the service rendered by a creature to the lotus-like feet of the Lord.

74. Those who do not worship Giriśa at the time of Pradoṣa, those others who do not bow down to Śiva worshipped by others, those deluded ones who do not imbibe this story by means of their cupped ears become utterly poor in all their births.

75. Those who perform the worship of the lotus-like feet of Parameśvara at the time of Pradoṣa with fully concentrated mind, will have their wealth, stock of grain, wife, progeny, good luck and assets on the increase in this world itself.

76. After placing Gaurī, the mother of the three worlds, on a gemset golden pedestal in his abode on the Kailāsa mountain, the Trident-bearing Lord wishes to dance at the time of Pradoṣa. All the Devas then attend upon him (and eulogize).

77. The Goddess of Speech plays on the lute; the Lord of Devas, Indra, plays on the flute; the Lotus-born Brahmā is active on the cymbals; Goddess Lakṣmī looks into the musical procedure; Viṣṇu dexterously plays on the Mṛdaṅga drum; the Devas stand in attendance all round. Thus everyone serves the Lord of Mṛḍānī at the time of Pradoṣa.

78. When the time of Pradoṣa arrives, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, birds, serpents, Siddhas, Śādhyas, Vidyādharas, immortal ones, bevies of celestial damsels and others inhabiting all the three worlds including goblins, stay at the sides of Hara.

79. Hence, at the time of Pradoṣa, only Śiva should be worshipped and not the others (such as) Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. If Maheśa is duly worshipped, all the lords of the celestial beings become pleased.

80. This your son in his previous birth was an excellent Brāhmaṇa, but he spent his life accepting monetary gifts and not by performing Yajñas and other excellent rites.

81. Hence, O beautiful Brāhmaṇa lady, he faced poverty. In order to remove that defect, let him seek refuge in Śaṅkara.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Importance of Pradoṣa [Continued]
[The Procedure of Śiva's Worship]

Sūta said:

1. On being thus informed by the sage, the chaste Brāhmaṇa lady bowed down to him again and enquired about the procedure of Śiva's worship.

Śāṇḍilya said:[1]

2. On either half of a lunar month, on the thirteenth *Tithi,* one should observe fast. He should take the holy bath three *Ghaṭis* prior to sunset.

3. Wearing white garments, he should remain calm and have restraint on his speech. He should take to the routine vows and observances. After performing the Sandhyā rites and Japa, he should begin the worship of Śiva.

4-9. In front of the Lord the ground should be cleaned with fresh water. A *Maṇḍala* (mystic diagram) should be drawn beautifully. The learned devotee should adorn it with canopies of white cloth as well as fruits, flowers and germinating sprouts.

A lotus design of five colours should also be made. The devotee should scrupulously collect together all the requisites of the adoration and remain pure in mind and body. He should be seated devoutly on a splendid stable seat.

The intelligent devotee should invoke the pedestal reciting the Mantra prescribed in the Āgamas. Thereafter, he should sanctify himself and the elements as well.

He should then perform breath control (*Prāṇāyāma*) thrice, uttering the *Bīja* syllables along with the *Anusvāra.* He should then perform the *Nyāsa* rite of the Mātṛkās (syllables of the alphabet) duly after meditating on the Supreme Deity.

Concluding the ritualistic touching of the limbs, uttering the Mātṛkās again, he should meditate on the great Lord Śiva. He should bow down to the preceptor on the left side and to Gaṇapati on the right side.

1. The sage explains the Tantric procedure of Śiva-worship at Pradoṣa in vv 2-76.

10. After performing the ritualistic touch (*Nyāsa*) of Dharma etc. on the pairs of shoulders and thighs as well as on the navel and sides, he shall perform the *Nyāsa* of Adharma etc. and Ananta etc. Then he should perform the *Nyāsa* of the Mantra in the heart as well as on the pedestal.

11-15. The *Nyāsa* of the entities beginning with *Ādhāraśakti* (Basic Power) and ending with Jñānātman (Brahman in the form of knowledge), should be done in due order. In the lotus of the heart perfectly visualised in the mind, in the charming pedestal consisting of nine Śaktis Lord Umāpati should be meditated upon.

DHYĀNA MANTRA OF ŚIVA

He has three eyes. The moon forms his coronet. He has the lustre of ten millions of moons. He has his hair matted, tawnish in colour. He shines forth with his gemset crown. His neck is blue in colour. His limbs are fine. He is embellished with serpents for his garlands. With one hand he shows the gesture of offering boon, (with the other that) of protection from fear. He wields an axe. Serpents constitute his bracelets, armlets, shoulder-ornaments and rings. He is clad in tigerhide and is seated on a throne decorated with gems.

After meditation of Śiva thus the devotee should contemplate upon the Daughter of the Mountain (seated) on his left side.

DHYĀNA MANTRA OF GAURĪ

16-21. She has the brilliant lustre of a Japā flower and the rising sun. She resembles (in brilliance) the cluster of lightning. She is slim and fascinating to the mind and the eyes. The crescent moon constitutes her crest jewel. She is kindly and affectionate. Her forelocks are blue in colour and are curly. She is shining forth with her dark-blue hair beautiful like a swarm of black-bees. Her shining gem-set ear-rings enhance the charm of her countenance. Her cheeks with spots of fresh saffron powder shine like the surface of a mirror. Sweet smile increases the brightness of the sprout-like reddish lips. She has folds in her neck like (the interior of a) conchshell. She is auspicious and benign. Her breasts are protruding like an opening bud of lotus. Her beautiful four hands hold a noose, a goad and exhibit the gestures of freedom from fear and granting of boons. Her bangles and rings remarkably shine with

a number of gems. She is embellished with a golden waistband, the beauty of which is enhanced by the three folds (in the navel region). She wears red garments and garlands. Divine sandalpaste is smeared over her body. The coronets of the wives of the Guardians of the Quarters bow down at her lotus-like feet. She is seated on a gemset throne; serpent kings form her retinue.

22-25. After meditating on the great Lord and the Goddess, the Daughter of the Mountain, thus, he should worship them in the same order as in *Nyāsa* (ritualistic touching of the limbs) by means of sweet scents etc. With five Brahmās he shall perform *Puṣpāñjali* (offering of handfuls of flowers) in the stipulated places or in the heart. With the *Mūla Mantra* he should perform it thrice. Assuming that he is Śiva himself, the aspirant devotee should worship the Lord on the external pedestal.

26. At the beginning of the adoration, he should utter the *Saṁkalpa* (solemn vow) with mental and bodily purity. Joining the palms together in prayer, he should think about Śaṅkara in the heart.

SAṀKALPA MANTRA

27-29. "In order to eradicate indebtedness, sin, ill-luck and poverty, O Śaṅkara, be pleased with me and bring out the destruction of sins in their entirety. O Bull-vehicled Lord, save me who am excessively distressed by the fire of misery and grief and afflicted with the fear of worldly existence, who am an utter wretch afflicted with many ailments. Come, O lord of the chiefs of Devas, O great lord, according freedom from fear. Accept in the company of Pārvatī, the worship performed by me unto you."

30. After uttering the *Saṁkalpa* thus, he shall duly begin the external adoration. He shall worship Guru (Preceptor) and Gaṇapati (respectively) on his left and right sides.

31. He shall worship Kṣetreśa on the north-east corner and then in due order, worship Vāṣtoṣpati, Vāgdevī and Kātyāyanī.

32. He should worship Dharma, Jñāna, Vairāgya and Aiśvarya with their respective words ending with *namaḥ* (obeisance). He should worship the feet of the pedestal in due order in the north-east and other corners uttering the vowels. He should then worship Adharma etc. (Ajñāna, Avairāgya and Anaiśvarya) along with *Anusvāra* and *Visarga.*

33. In the four quarters and in the middle, he should worship

Ananta along with *Tāraka* (*Aum*) with the forms of Sattva. He should perform the *Nyāsa* of the three Guṇas beginning with Sattva on the pedestals, in the form of threads (for *guṇa* means 'thread' also).

34-36. Then in the upper petal, he shall worship Māyā along with Lakṣmī and Śiva. At its tip, he shall worship the lotus again as well as the entire triad of Maṇḍalas pervaded by leaves, filaments and blossoms by means of the letters constituting the *Tāra* (Praṇava) Mantra. After worshipping the three *Padmas* within the *Maṇḍala* (diagram) with great respect, he should worship in the quarters, Vāmā, Jyeṣṭhā and Raudrī with their parts etc.

37. He should worship the nine Śaktis along with the nine vowels. He should worship them in the heart by means of the *Pīṭhamantra* beginning with the three *Bījas*.

38-40. Vṛṣabha, Kṣetreśa, Caṇḍeśa, Durgā, Skanda and Nandin, Gaṇeśa and Sainyapa, characterised by their own special signs, should be worshipped along with the following: Repeated first parts, five Mūrti Śaktis, Triśakti Mūrtis, the two Nidhis (Śaṅkha and Padma), Ananta etc., the Mothers, Vṛṣa etc. and the Siddhis beginning with *Aṇimā*, Indra and others together with their weapons.

41-43. The eight *Aiśvaryas* (Supernatural Powers) are these: *Aṇimā* (minuteness), *Mahimā* (greatness), *Garimā* (weightiness), *Laghimā* (lightness), *Īśitva* (ability to rule), *Vaśitva* (ability to control), *Prāpti* (ability to reach), *Prākāmya* (abundance). The eight powers are in the form of fiery elements. The adoration has been mentioned by the sages to be along with five Brahmās, Hṛllekha etc. as well as Umā and others, Indra and others constituting the ancillaries. He should worship Umā, Caṇḍeśvara and others beginning with the north.

44. Thus, the devotee should worship Lord Sadāśiva accompanied by Umā. He is in the form of refulgence and in the worship he has to be honoured along with the *Āvaraṇas* (coverings—ancillary deities). The worship should be a full-fledged one with all *Upacāras* (services as mentioned in the following verses):

45-51. The Lord should be bathed by means of the holy waters from five conchshells as well as *Pañcāmṛta*. While bathing the *Rudrasūkta* should be recited with single-pointed devotion. *Āsana* (offering of seats) and other services should be rendered while the requisite *Mantras* are being recited. The seat offered should be a

gold one covered with divine garments. The *Arghya* should have the eight requisite qualities. The *Pādya* (washing the feet) should be with clear water. The same thing for ritualistic rinsing of the mouth. *Madhuparka* should abound in honey. *Ācamana* should be offered again and the holy ablution be conducted by means of Mantras. Similarly a sacred thread, garments and ornaments should be offered. Pure sweet scents with eight ancillaries should be offered.

The *Sādhaka* (devotee) then should offer different kinds of sweet-smelling flowers and garlands of flowers as and when obtained such as Bilva, Mandāra, Kalhāra, Lotus, Dhattūra, Karṇikāra, Śaṇa flower, Jasmine, Darbha, Apāmārga, Tulasī, Mādhavī, Campaka etc., Bṛhatī and Karavīra. The incense offered should be of black agallochum and the lamp shall be splendid.

52-56. The next item is the offering of *Naivedya* with milk-pudding along with ghee and side dishes and also sweetmeat with cooked pie together with sugar and jaggery. It should be soaked in honey and the snacks should be blended with curds. With this alone as *Havis* (what is offered into the sacred fire) the devotee should consign it to the fire sanctified by means of Mantras. In accordance with the injunctions contained in the Āgama texts, the devotee should be restrained by the instructions of the preceptor and should offer *Naivedya* once again along with an excellent Tāmbūla. He should then dedicate incense, Nīrājana (offering of lights in a circular waving motion), a beautiful umbrella and an excellent mirror while reciting different kinds of Mantras both Vedic and Tāntrika.

If the devotee is physically incapable or if he is poor, he should worship only as per his monetary capacity. The Lord of Gaurī becomes satisfied even with a mere flower given with ardent devotion.

57. Thereafter, he should worship all the subsidiary deities, Gaṇeśa and others. The wise man should eulogize with different kinds of hymns and prayers and should prostrate himself with his eight limbs touching the ground.

58. Thereafter, the devotee should circumambulate Vṛṣa (bull), Caṇḍeśvara and others. After concluding the adoration duly, he should pray to the Consort of the Daughter of the Mountain.

THE EULOGY AND THE PRAYER

59. "Be victorious, O Lord; O Lord of the universe. Glory to

(you), O Śaṅkara, the eternal one. Be victorious, O presiding deity of all Suras. Be victorious, O Lord worshipped by all Suras.

60. Glory to you, O Lord transcending all the attributes. Be victorious, O bestower of all boons. Glory to you, O eternal one having no need of support. Be victorious, O immutable one, O sustainer of the entire universe.

61. Be victorious, O Lord, the sole one to be known in the whole universe. Glory to you, O Lord wearing the serpent king as an ornament. Be victorious, O Lord of Gaurī, O Śaṁbhu. Be victorious, O Lord with the semicircular moon as your crest-jewel.

62. Hail to you (who are) brilliant like ten million suns (combined); to you, the receptacle of infinite good qualities.

63. Victory to Rudra of uneven (three) eyes, one beyond comprehension, the pure (unsullied one). Be victorious, O Lord, O ocean of mercy. Glory to you, O destroyer of the distress of the devotee. Be victorious, O Lord who redeem us from the impassable ocean of worldly existence.

64. Be pleased with me, O great Lord. I am distressed and disgusted with the world. Remove all the fear due to sin, and protect me, O great Lord.

65-66. I am sinking in the mire of great poverty. I am blighted by great sins. I am ruined by intense grief. I am engulfed by the weight of indebtedness. I am being burned by (my) actions. O Śaṅkara, be pleased with me afflicted by malignant Planets."

67. If the devotee is poor, he should request thus the Lord of Girijā, at the conclusion of the adoration. The king though possessing much wealth should request Lord Īśvara as follows:

A PRAYER

68. "O Śaṅkara, with thy favour, let me have a long life, freedom from diseases, ever increasing treasury, progress in might and bliss forever.

69. May the enemies perish. May the Planets be favourable to me. Let the marauders and robbers perish. Let all the people of the nation be free from adversity.

70. May famine, pestilence and distress subside all over the earth. Let there be food-grains in plenty. Let all the quarters be happy and cheerful."

71. Thus the devotee shall propitiate the Lord of Girijā at the

time of Pradoṣa. Thereafter, he should feed Brāhmaṇas and please them with monetary gifts.

72. Thus the worship of Śiva has been narrated by me. It bestows all cherished desires as a boon. It destroys all sins. It is destructive of all poverty.

73. It shall eradicate all major sins and most of the minor sins except that resulting from misappropriating Śiva's assets.

74. Expiations for all the sins including that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter are shown in the Purāṇas and Smṛtis, but none for the sins of those who misappropriate Śiva's property.

75. Why speak too much? I shall summarise everything in half a verse. The worship of Śiva shall eradicate hundreds of (sins of) Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

76. Thus the procedure of the worship of Śiva at the time of Pradoṣa has been narrated to you. It is a secret to all living beings. There is no doubt about it.

77. Let the adoration be performed by these two boys. Within a year you will all attain the highest achievements.

78. On hearing these words of Śāṇḍilya, the Brāhmaṇa lady bowed down to the feet of the sage along with the two boys.

The Brāhmaṇa lady said:

79. O holy Sir, I am contented and blessed today merely by your vision. These two boys have sought refuge in you.

80. This is my son named Śucivrata. This is the prince named by me as Dharmagupta.

81. These two and I, O holy Sir, are servants at your feet. Save us who have fallen into the terrible ocean of poverty.

82. When the Brāhmaṇa lady sought refuge in him thus, the sage consoled her with nectar-like sweet words. Thereafter, the sage imparted the specific Mantras for the propitiation of Śiva.

83. Then the boys who had been instructed by the sage and the Brāhmaṇa lady, bowed and took leave of them. Then they departed from that Śiva temple.

84. Thereafter those two boys began to perform the adoration of Pārvatī's Consort (Śiva) at the time of Pradoṣa in accordance with the instructions of the excellent sage.

85. Even as the Brāhmaṇa boy and the prince began to adore the Lord, four months passed by very happily.

86. Once the Brāhmaṇa boy, unaccompanied by the prince, went to the river to take his bath. He roamed about playfully.

87. There in a paved platform near the bank of the river, that had been eroded by the continuous flow of the stream, he saw a treasure trove shining.

88. On seeing it and considering it a divine legacy, the boy took it on his head and went home highly delighted.

89. With great excitement, he brought the treasure trove inside the house and spoke to his mother:

90. "Mother, mother, see the favour of (gift from) the Lord of Girijā. A treasure in the form of a pot has been shown by the merciful one."

91. That chaste lady who got surprised, called the prince and congratulating her son said, acknowledging (the efficacy of) the worship of Śiva:

92. "Listen to me, dear sons. Share this treasure trove equally between you two. That is my order."

93. On hearing these words of his mother, the Brāhmaṇa boy was glad. But the prince who was confident of the worship of Śaṅkara, replied thus:

94-95. "O mother, this has come to your son due to his own merit. I do not wish to share the acquisition. Let him alone enjoy what has been obtained through his own merit. The same Lord will be merciful to me."

96. Then they continued their worship in the same house with extreme delight. Thus a year passed by.

97. Once, when spring season had set in, the prince was sporting about in the forest along with the Brāhmaṇa boy.

98. They went far into the forest. Both of them saw Gandharva maidens in hundreds playing there.

99. Seeing from a long distance those comely damsels playing about, the Brāhmaṇa boy spoke to the prince:

100-103a. "Beyond this you should not go. Some females are playing there. Learned men with hearts free from impurities avoid proximity with women. These are proud of their prime of youth. They fraudulently delude the people they see. They are great experts in the art of speaking coaxing words. Hence a scholar engaged in his own duty and particularly a Brahmacārin (religious student) should avoid the proximity of women and conversation with them. Hence I am not enthusiastic to go to the place of sport of these

fawn-eyed ones."

103b. Saying so, the Brāhmaṇa boy returned and stood at a distance.

104. But the prince was overcome by curiosity. He fearlessly proceeded towards their sporting ground.

105. Amongst those Gandharva girls, there was a girl of very lovely face. Seeing the prince approaching in her own direction, she thought thus:

106-107. 'Oh, how wonderful! Who is this youth of lovely limbs, handsome in his bodily features? He is walking majestically like an elephant in rut. Verily he is the ocean of the nectar of beauty of form. His eyes are large and tremulously roving. Sweet smile adds to his attractiveness. He can be compared to the god of Love in his glorious form. His body is characterised by tenderness of limbs.'

108. Thinking thus with increasing wonder, on seeing the prince from far, she turned to her friends and spoke these words:

109-110. "Dear friends, a little away from this place there is an excellent forest full of Campaka, Aśoka, Punnāga and Bakula trees of various sorts. All of you go to that forest and gather flowers. I shall wait for you here till you return."

111. On being commanded thus, the friends proceeded towards the other forest. With her eyes fixed on the prince, the Gandharva girl stood there waiting.

112-113. On seeing that girl of tender limbs blooming in the prime of her youth far excelling Tilottamā in the richness of beautiful form, the prince stared at her with curiosity. As luck would have it, he experienced the pain of the arrows of Madana (the god of Love).

114. As the prince arrived, the Gandharva girl quickly got up and offered him a seat of tender foliage.

115-116. All her patience and restraint had already gone at the sight of the handsome features of the prince. Her senses were disturbed. Still the slender-waisted girl offered all formalities (of reception). After he was seated, she began to ask him: "Who are you, O lotus-eyed one? From which land have you come? Whose son are you?" On being asked thus lovingly he related to her everything.

117. He revealed his identity as the son of the king of Vidarbha orphaned due to the death of both the parents. He told that his

original region had been captured by enemies and that he had been compelled to live in a foreign realm.

118-119a. After mentioning everything, the prince asked her in return: "O beautiful girl, who are you? What is the purpose of your being here? Whose daughter are you? What are you thinking in your heart? What do you wish to speak?"

119b-124. On being asked thus, she said: "Listen, O most excellent prince, there is an eminent Gandharva named Dravika. I am his daughter named Aṁśumatī. On seeing you come, I became eagerly desirous of speaking with you. I have sent away all my friends. I am now alone, O highly intelligent one. There is no one who excels me in all musical arts. All the celestial damsels are happy in my company. I am an expert in all fine arts. I am able to understand the innermost workings of everyone. I know what you wish. Your mind has united in love with me. In the same manner my eagerness towards you has been ordained by destiny. Henceforth, there will be no separation between our affections."

125. After speaking to him thus with great love, the Gandharva girl presented him with a pearl necklace that had adorned her breasts.

126. Taking that wonderful necklace from her, the love-lorn prince spoke to her as she stood there full of excessive delight:

127-128. "O timid girl, what you said is true. Still I have something to say. I am a poor prince deprived of my realm. How can you be my beloved? You are a girl with a father to look after you. How can you transgress his instructions? It does not behove you to do as you please like a deluded girl."

129-130. On hearing these words of the prince, the girl spoke with a pure smile: "Let it be so. I shall do like that. See my fancy. O my lover, go home now. Come back in the morning day-after-tomorrow. Come here itself. This is a serious matter. It is no joke."

131. After saying this to the prince, that comely girl went away in the company of her friends. So did the prince.

132. He approached his friend, the Brāhmaṇa boy, with delight and told him everything. In his company he went home too.

133. The prince delighted the chaste Brāhmaṇa lady (with his story), and went to the forest along with the Brāhmaṇa boy the day after the next day.

134. Reaching the place indicated by her before, the prince saw

the king of Gandharvas accompanied by his daughter.

135. The king of Gandharvas heartily welcomed the boys, and made them sit in a charming seat. He then spoke to the prince:

The Gandharva said:

136-137. O son of an eminent king, yesterday I had been to Kailāsa. There I saw Lord Mahādeva accompanied by Pārvatī. That Lord of Devas called me and in the presence of the heaven-dwellers the Lord, the ocean of sympathy, said:

138-140. "There is a prince on the earth named Dharmagupta. He is poor. He has been ousted from his kingdom. His realm has been occupied by his enemies. At the instance of his preceptor that boy is always engaged in adoring me. Due to his power all his ancestors attained to me today. O excellent Gandharva, you must help him. Let him be reinstated in his kingdom after killing his enemies."

141-142. On being commanded thus by Maheśa, I returned to my palace. I have been repeatedly requested by my daughter too. Realizing that all these things constitute the will and command of Śaṁbhu, the compassionate one, I have hence taken my daughter and come to this forest.

143. I am now giving my daughter Aṁśumatī to you. After killing your enemies, I shall establish you in your own kingdom at the behest of Śiva.

144. You shall enjoy all pleasures in that city along with this my daughter. At the end of ten thousand years, you will go to Śiva's abode.

145. There too my daughter will rejoin you with this very divine body in the presence of Śiva.

146. Addressing the prince thus, the king of Gandharvas gave his daughter in marriage to him.

147-148. He gave as present dazzlingly brilliant jewels in plenty, a crest-jewel resembling the moon, shining pearl necklaces, divine ornaments and garments, gold utensils, ten thousand elephants and hundred thousand blue horses.

149. He gave him thousands of chariots made of gold and very huge in size. (He gave him) a divine chariot also and a bow too comparable to Indra's weapon.

150. He gave him thousands of miraculous weapons, two quivers with inexhaustible supply of arrows, an unbreakable golden shield and a Śakti (javelin) that could devastate enemies.

151. In order to attend upon his daughter, he gladly gave five thousand slave-girls and wealth of different types.

152. In order to help him, the king of Gandharvas gave him a formidable army of Gandharvas with all the four conventional divisions.

153. Thus the son of the eminent king attained excellent glory. Accompanied by a loving and lovable wife, he rejoiced with his wealth.

154. After celebrating the marriage of his daughter at the proper time, the king of Gandharvas ascended an aerial chariot and went to heaven.

155. After his marriage Dharmagupta went to his city again accompanied by the army of Gandharvas and killed the army of the enemies.

156. After killing Durdharṣaṇa in battle by means of Śakti, and with the help of the Gandharva army, he annihilated the armies of his enemy and entered his own city.

157. Then he was crowned by the ministers and excellent Brāhmaṇas. Seated on a gemset throne, he ruled the kingdom free from thorns (enemies).

158. The Brāhmaṇa lady who had looked after and brought him up like her own son, continued to be his mother and the Brāhmaṇa boy his own brother.

159. His wife was the daughter of Gandharva. Thus the lord of Vidarbha propitiated Lord Giriśa and became king by the name Dharmagupta.

160. Thus others too, by propitiating the Lord of the Daughter of the Mountain at the time of Pradoṣa, acquire desired objects and attain salvation on death.

Sūta said:

161. This is a great meritorious act of devotion—the worship of Śaṅkara at the time of Pradoṣa. It is the greatest means of attaining moral excellence, wealth, worldly enjoyment and salvation.

162-164. If anyone listens to this meritorious, extremely wonderful greatness of Pradoṣa, or narrates it with mental and physical

purity at the end of the worship, at the time of Pradoṣa, he will never be tormented by poverty in the course of hundreds of births. Endowed with knowledge and prosperity, he will go to Śiva's city at the end.

After attaining the very rare human body those who perform the worship of the feet of Parameśvara are really blessed. They have conquered the three worlds by means of their own merit. The dust of their lotus-like feet sanctifies the entire universe.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Religious Vow to be Observed on Mondays[1]: *The Story of Sīmantinī*

Sūta said:

1. Those who know the truth called 'Śiva', who is eternal bliss, quiescent, devoid of doubts, free from ailments, and bereft of beginning and end, have reached the highest state.

2. Those who have no worldly entanglement, those who are free from attachment to the enjoyment of worldly pleasures and lustful pursuits, those who have devotion to Śiva with no ulterior motive, are the wise ones. They attain salvation.

3. Those who direct their love towards Śiva even with the worldly pleasures in their mind, are not adversely affected by those worldly pursuits, even as they enjoy their benefits.

4. A man endowed with devotion to Śiva, irrespective of the motive thereof, does not perish. He attains the greatest goal in due course.

5. Desirous of ascending the highest region, a man attracted mentally to worldly pleasures, should worship Śaṁbhu along with regular activities. When the enjoyment of pleasures ends, he shall attain Śiva.

6. Generally no one is capable of renouncing entirely the keenness to enjoy worldly pleasures. Hence, the adoration in happy

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1. The chapter illustrates the efficacy of this Vrata by the story of Sīmantinī's restoration to Saubhāgya by fasting etc. on Mondays.

combination with regular activities, acts as the very wish-yielding divine cow unto all embodied beings.

7. This is the religious duty ordained for those who seek salvation at the end of the mortal body, after enjoying happiness for a long time, sporting about in the world, albeit, it is a creation of the illusive Māyā.

8. The worship of Śiva is always the cause of heavenly pleasures as well as absolute salvation, particularly when it is performed on Mondays associated with Pradoṣa and such other auspicious occasions.

9. Nothing is difficult of access here and hereafter to those who perform the adoration of Śiva even on ordinary Mondays.

10. The devotee should restrain all sense-organs, observe fast and be perfectly pure on Monday and duly worship Śiva by means of Vedic hymns or ordinary prayers.

11. A religious student or a householder, a virgin or a married girl or even a widow obtains the desired boon by worshipping Śiva.

12. In this context I shall narrate a story that delights all those who listen to (it). On hearing this attentively they will have devotion to Śaṁbhu engendered in them and will attain salvation.

13. In Āryāvarta there was a certain king well-known as Citravarmā. He was the foremost among those who had pious pursuits. He was Dharmarāja (god of Death) unto all the wicked ones.

14. He was a protector of all religious institutions, chastiser of those who take to the evil path, performer of all types of Yajñas and saviour of those who seek refuge.

15. He scrupulously and regularly performed all meritorious deeds; he gifted away all sorts of riches; he vanquished hosts of enemies; he was a devotee of Śiva and Mukunda (i.e. Viṣṇu).

16. He begot powerfully brilliant sons of his wives faithful and favourably disposed towards him, and after a long time, a girl of excellent countenance, eagerly awaited for a long time.

17. After luckily getting a daughter in the same way as Himavān got Pārvatī, he considered himself on a par with the Devas, one whose desires were fulfilled.

18. Once he invited a good many excellent Brāhmaṇas conversant with the (astrological) characteristics of the newly born and prompted by curiosity asked them about the (future) events

associated with the nativity of his daughter.

19-22. An excellent Brāhmaṇa among them, deep in knowledge, spoke thus: "This daughter of yours, O king, Sīmantinī by name, shall have everything auspicious and splendid like Umā; she will be having the beauty of form like Damayantī; conversant with all fine arts like Goddess Sarasvatī and endowed with greatly auspicious qualities like Lakṣmī. Like the mother of Devas, she will have excellent progeny; be steadfast in vows and observances like the daughter of Janaka; brilliant with excellent lustre like solar splendour and charming like moonlight. She will rejoice in the company of her husband for ten thousand years. She will beget eight sons and attain great happiness."

23. The king honoured with monetary gifts the Brāhmaṇa who spoke thus and had the greatest pleasure by imbibing the nectar of his sweet words.

24. Another bold Brāhmaṇa of unmeasured splendour said: "In her fourteenth year she will be faced with widowhood."

25. On hearing these words, cruel like a stroke of thunderbolt, the king became excessively agitated in his mind for a while.

26. All the Brāhmaṇas were sent off by the king who was favourable and friendly to them. Considering that everything was the handiwork of adverse fate, the king became free from anxiety.

27. The girl Sīmantinī passed the stage of childhood. From one of her friends she heard about her destined widowhood.

28. She was extremely disappointed. She became anxious. She approached Maitreyī, the wife of Sage Yājñavalkya, and asked:

29. "O mother, I am extremely frightened and have sought refuge in your lotus-like feet. It behoves you to suggest some rite that will enhance my *Saubhāgya* (conjugal felicity)."

30. Thus, when the princess sought refuge in her, the chaste wife of the sage spoke to her: "O lady of tender limbs, seek refuge in Pārvatī, in the company of Śiva.

31-33. With mental and bodily purity, worship Śiva and Gaurī on Mondays. Observe fast, after taking the holy ablution and wearing dust-free (clean) garments. With steady mind and restrained speech, perform the befitting adoration, feed Brāhmaṇas and propitiate Śiva ardently.

By bathing (the Śiva Liṅga) there will be destruction of sins; by worshipping the pedestal one can gain an empire; by offering sweet scents, garlands and raw rice, one shall get complete

happiness and conjugal bliss.

34. By offering incense one will get sweet odour; by offering lamps one will get brilliance; by offering foodstuffs one shall get enjoyment of pleasures; by offering betel leaves one will have prosperity.

35. By offering obeisance one gets religious merit, wealth, worldly pleasures and salvation. Japa alone is the cause of the achievement of the eight kinds of supernatural powers.

36. By performing Homa one will have increased realization of all cherished desires. By feeding Brāhmaṇas all the Devas will be propitiated.

37. Thus on Mondays propitiate Śiva and Śivā also. Even if you were to face great adversity, you will be absolutely free.

38. Even if you find yourself involved in the most terrible distress, you will cross the great danger by the power of the adoration of Śiva."

39. After adominishing and instructing Sīmantī thus, the chaste (wife of the sage) went away. The princess of great beauty did so (as she was advised).

40. Nala begot of Damayantī a son named Indrasena. He had a son named Candrāṅgada and he resembled the moon.

41. At the instance of his preceptor, the excellent king Citravarmā invited that prince and gave his daughter Sīmantinī in marriage to him.

42. There were great festivities at the time of the celebration of her marriage. There was a great gathering of all kings at the time.

43. After the marriage, the satisfied Candrāṅgada spent a few months in the abode of his father-in-law.

44. Once the prince wanted to cross Yamunā. The mighty prince sportingly got on to a boat along with some of his friends.

45. While the prince was crossing Kālindī (Yamunā), the boat got caught up into a whirlpool and it drowned along with the boatmen.

46. There was a loud cry of lamentation on both the banks. The wailing of the soldiers who were watching the accident rose up to the sky.

47. Some were drowned. Some were swallowed by crocodiles. The prince and some others disappeared in the great expanse of water.

48. On hearing about it, King Citravarmā became bewildered and stunned. He came to the banks of Yamunā and became (unconscious and) motionless.

49. On hearing about this, the wives of the king swooned and fell. Sīmantinī too fainted and fell down on the ground.

50. Others too, the chief ministers, the ladies and the preceptors became worried and dismayed. With hairs dishevelled, they wailed and shouted.

51. On hearing it, the eminent king Indrasena became miserable for the accident that befell his son. He lost sense and fell down along with his queens.

52. His ministers, his citizens, the inhabitants of his realm including children, women and old men became grief-stricken and lamented.

53. Some beat their chests out of grief. Some hit their own heads. "Alas! O Prince! O dear one, where are you?" Saying thus, they wandered here and there.

54. Thus the city of King Indrasena and that of Citravarmā became agitated all of a sudden, involved as they were in the wretched state of grief.

55. Consoled by elderly people, King Citravarmā slowly returned to the city and tried to console his daughter.

56. With the help of the kinsmen who had come, the king performed all the obsequies of his son-in-law who was drowned.

57. The chaste lady Sīmantinī was at first thinking of going to the region where her husband had gone. But out of love, her father prevented her. Hence she resigned herself to the widowhood.

58. Despite the fact that she had become a widow, the princess of splendid behaviour did not abandon the excellent Monday *Vrata* (holy observance) as instructed by the wife of the Sage.

59. Thus she faced the terrible misery in her fourteenth year. Meditating on the lotus-like feet of Śiva, she passed three years.

60. Already King Indrasena was more or less out of his senses due to the death of his son. Further his kinsmen forcibly occupied his realm consisting of the usual seven constituents.

61. The king who had no other progeny was deprived of his throne by his powerful kinsmen. Moreover, he was confined in prison along with his wives.

62. His son Candrāṅgada who had drowned in the waters of

Yamunā went deep into the river and saw serpent damsels.

63. They were engaged in aquatic sports. They were surprised on seeing the prince. They then took him to Pātāla, the abode of serpents.

64. Hurriedly led by the serpent maidens, the prince entered the wonderfully beautiful city of Takṣaka.

65-72. The prince saw that city resembling the abode of Mahendra. It was illuminated by rays issuing from big jewels There were hundreds of palaces made of diamonds, *Lapis lazuli* and crystals,with the main gateways made of rubies. They shone with pearl necklaces. The ground was paved with Candrakānta slabs and the doors were made of gold. The brightness was enhanced by thousands of gemset lamps.

There in the midst of his assembly he saw Takṣaka, the king of serpents, seated on a gemset throne. His hundreds of hoods shone brilliantly. He was clad in divine garments. He appeared brilliant with gemset ear-rings. Crowns set with many jewels added to his lustre.

Innumerable excellent serpents who radiated rays from the gems in their hoods and who were themselves adorned with gems, attended on him with palms joined in reverence. He was surrounded by a thousand Nāga maidens remarkably shining with beauty, youth, sweetness, seductive charms and amorous gaits. His limbs glittered with divine ornaments. His body was smeared with divine sandalpaste. He was formidably unassailable like the all-destroying fire at the end of the world. In his brilliance he vied with the sun.

73. On seeing him the bold prince bowed down to him in the assembly hall itself. Then he got up and stood with palms joined in reverence. The brilliance (of Takṣaka) dazzled his eyes.

74. On seeing the charming prince, the king of serpents asked the serpent damsels, "Who is this? Where has he come from?"

75. They said: "He was by chance seen by us in the waters of Yamunā. We do not know his name or family. He has been brought into your presence as he is."

76. The prince was then asked by the noble-souled Takṣaka: "Who are you? Whose son? What is your native land? How did you happen to come here?"

77. – Hearing his words the prince said:

The Prince said:

78-81. There is on the earth a kingdom named Niṣadha. A famous king named Nala ruled it. That king of meritorious renown was the splendid husband of Damayantī. A son of great might was born of him named Indrasena. I am his son named Candrāṅgada. Soon after marriage, I was staying in my father-in-law's abode. While sporting about in the water of Yamunā, I got drowned as was destined. I have now been brought near you by these serpent damsels, that I could see your lotus-like feet. I am blessed; I am blessed today. My parents also are blessed, because I was seen and talked to by you out of pity.

Sūta said:

82. On hearing these exquisite, unflurried, pleasing words, Takṣaka was prompted by curiosity and he asked the prince:

Takṣaka said:

83. O scion of the family of a king, do not be afraid. Be bold. Among all the Devas which Deva is always worshipped by you?

The prince said:

84. The Lord who is remembered as Mahādeva among all the Devas, that cosmic-souled Śiva, the consort of Umā, is worshipped by us.

85. That Maheśvara is worthy of our adoration, with whose modicum of brilliance, named Rajas, has been evolved the lord of subjects i.e. Brahmā and with the very same thing, he created this universe.

86. That Śiva from whose parts the eternal Viṣṇu possessed the divine quality of Sattva and is able to sustain the universe as the Bhūtātmā ('Immanent soul of all living beings'), is worshipped by us.

87. That Īśvara from whose Tāmasa part was born Rudra who is like deadly fire and who annihilates this universe, is worthy of being worshipped.

88. The Śiva is our ultimate goal, who is the creator of Creator Brahmā, the cause of all causes and the greatest refulgence of all refulgent luminaries.

89. That Śiva is our greatest goal who, though existing very near, appears to be far off unto those whose minds are affected by sins, and whose power is unlimited.

90. That cosmic-souled Sadāśiva is worthy of being worshipped by us, who abides in the elements such as Fire, Earth, Wind, Water and Ether.

91. That Śiva is being worshipped by us who is the eternal witness unto all living beings, is immanent in the soul as the unsullied one, and whose will controls the world.

92. That Śiva is our goal, whom they speak of as the (only) one, ancient, primordial Puruṣa, untouched by the aberrations of the Guṇas, whom some call *Kṣetrajña* ('knower of the field i.e. body'), others call *Turīya* ('the fourth one') and still others *Kūṭastha* ('the immovable, unchangeable Supreme Soul abiding in the heart').

93. That Supreme Śiva is worthy of adoration to us, whom mental operations cannot touch, whose ultimate (real) truth is incomprehensible, whose brilliance is beyond any limitation, whose real form is of the nature of 'not that' (expressed in words '*neti neti*'), (who is beyond the reach of) the activities of the mind and speech of individual souls.

94. That Śiva is our goal, after getting whose favour good men never desire even the glamorous post of Indra and they move about fearlessly after transcending the wheel of time and warding off the fastening bolt of mundane activities.

95. We perform the adoration of that Śiva always, whose (mere) remembrance immediately eradicates all the ailments resulting from sins in their entirety, of even those who are born as Pulkasas, and whose real form is worthy of being sought by the Śruti.

96. That Lord with the crescent moon for his crest-jewel is our ultimate goal, on whose head the celestial river has found a niche, whose body is shared by the Goddess, the Mother of the universe, and whose ear-rings are constituted by Takṣaka and Vāsuki.

97. That Īśa who has conquered the creations of the *Guṇas*, whose lotus-like feet reign gloriously on the top of the sacred scriptures, whose form is ever present in the hearts of Yogins and whose divine features illuminate all the principles, is being worshipped by us.

Sūta said:

98. On hearing his words, Takṣaka became delighted in his mind. With his devotion to Mahādeva kindled, he spoke to the prince:

Takṣaka said:

99. O son of an eminent king, welfare unto thee. I am pleased with you, because though yet a boy, you know the highest truth of Śiva that is greater than the greatest.

100. Here the world is full of jewels. These girls have charming eyes. These are all wish-yielding Kalpa trees. These wells have nectarine juice for their water.

101. Here there is no fear from the terrible death; there is no affliction due to old age and ailments. Sport about here as you please. Enjoy all the pleasures as you deem fit.

102. On being told thus by the king of serpents, that prince of large-hearted nature, stood with palms joined in reverence and spoke with delight:

103. "I was married with a wife at the proper time. My wife observes religious vows and restrictions regularly. She is always devoted to the worship of Śiva. I am the only son of my parents.

104. They are, to be sure, overwhelmed with great grief considering me to be dead. Most probably, they too are dead or luckily they might have somehow managed to be alive.

105. Hence, I must not prolong my stay here. Kindly take me back to that world."

106-107. When the prince spoke thus, the king of serpents fed him with excellent divine food offered by the wish-yielding celestial trees. He made him happy further by means of excellent scents, garments, garlands and divine gemset ornaments of divine characteristics. He pleased him with all types of enjoyments and spoke, "Whenever you remember me, I shall gladly reveal myself to you."

108-110. Takṣaka gave the prince a horse that could go wherever one wished it to go, and which went unhindered over different continents, oceans and worlds. He gave him jewel-set ornaments and fabrics of divine and superhuman origin. The serpent king presented him with a Rākṣasa who would carry (his luggage). There was a serpent boy to assist him. After offering all these,

Takṣaka sent him off with great delight.

111. Thus Candrāṅgada took with him all those rich presents. Seated on that horse able to move as he pleased, he set off accompanied by those two attendants.

112. In a short while he rose up from the waters of the rivers, and could sport about on the beautiful banks seated on the divine horse.

113. At the same time his slender, chaste wife Sīmantinī came there to bathe, surrounded by her female companions.

114. On the banks of the river, she saw the prince sporting about accompanied by the Rākṣasa who had assumed a human form and the son of a Nāga.

115. He was adorned with divine jewels, divine garlands and ornaments. The divine fragrance of his body spread over ten Yojanas.

116. On seeing that (prince) of unusual form and features riding a divine horse, she stood frightened as though stunned and rendered out of senses with her eyes fixed on him.

117-119. On seeing her, the prince seemed to remember her as one seen before, though she was now devoid of all ornaments round her neck, without even the auspicious (marital) thread (*Maṅgalasūtra*). Her tresses were dishevelled and uncombed. She had no unguents on her body. There was no blue collyrium in her eyes. She was lean and distressed with grief.

On seeing her, he got down from the horse and sat down on the banks. He invited her to him and spoke to her as she was seated:

120. "Who are you, O chaste lady? Whose wife are you? And whose daughter? Why are you so much distressed with unbearable grief at this early age (not yet out of teens)?"

121. On being asked so lovingly, the lady stood bashfully shedding tears. As she was unable to speak, her female companion spoke everything.

122-123. "This is the daughter-in-law of the king of Niṣadha, Sīmantinī by name. She is the crowned queen of Candrāṅgada and daughter of Citravarmā. As fate would have it, her husband drowned in the waters of this great river. Hence the girl obviously widowed, has become emaciated due to grief.

124. Thus she has spent three years bearing the excessive grief. Today being Monday, she has come here for her bath.

125. Her father-in-law, the great king, has been deprived of his

kingdom by his enemies. He has been imprisoned along with his wife and kept under their control.

126. Still she continues to observe her splendid religious vows. The lady of pure heart worships Maheśvara in the company of Aṁbikā with great devotion."

Sūta said:

127. After thus intimating everything to him through her companion, Sīmantinī of great pious observances addressed the prince herself.

128-130. "Who are you? A Deva? A king? A Siddha? A Gandharva? Or a Kinnara? You are verily like Kandarpa (god of Love). Who are these two attendants of yours? What prompts you to enquire about me so lovingly? O mighty one, do you happen to know me? Have you seen me anywhere? You appear to be one seen before as though a near kinsman. Kindly narrate everything truthfully. Indeed good people give weightage to truth."

Sūta said:

131. After saying this much, the princess cried for a long time with her throat choked with tears. She fainted and fell down on the ground. Her female companions crowded round her. She could not utter anything further.

132. On hearing everything that caused grief to his beloved, Candrāṅgada kept silent for a short while, himself undergoing excessive grief.

133. He consoled his beloved wife by means of different words cleverly expressed. "Indeed we are Siddhas and Devas with ability to move about as we please", he said.

134. Then he dragged her to him with force while she hesitated when he caught hold of her hand. Hairs stood on their ends all over her body. He spoke thus into her ear.

135-137. "O lady of excellent countenance, somewhere in this world your husband has been seen by me. He is delighted with your observances of vows. He will come quickly. Within two or three days he will surely remove your grief. I am a friend of your husband and have come here to tell this. In this respect no doubt need be entertained. I promise by the feet of Śiva. But let this be a secret well kept in your heart. It should not be revealed to anyone."

138. On hearing his words flowing like nectar in hundreds of torrents, she looked at him frequently with dismay and excitement.

139-140. She carefully noted his loving words sweet like honey. Noting carefully his sweet side-glances and graceful charm, his body which was thrilled (with hair standing on their ends) at the touch of her hand, the characteristics of his person, tone, age and complexion, she suspected and thought:

141-146. 'Surely this is my husband. It cannot be anyone else. My heart is agitated with love and is attached to him. How has he come here from the other world? How could he assume such a form as this? Unfortunate that I am, am I destined to see my lost husband? Is this a dream? No, no, this is no illusion. Is he a rogue? Is he a Yakṣa or a Gandharva? The wife of the sage had advised me to continue this pious observance even when I am in great adversity. Is this the fruit of that observance? An excellent Brāhmaṇa had predicted my conjugal bliss for ten thousand years. Indeed, have his words come true? Excepting Īśvara who will know these things? Everyday good omens forebode auspicious future. If the Consort of Pārvatī is pleased, what is impossible to be achieved by embodied beings?'

147. After pondering thus for a while, she became free from all doubts. While she stood with the face down due to bashfulness, he disclosed into her ear what he intended.

148. "Let us go near my parents who are grief-stricken to communicate this news. O fair lady, hail unto you! You shall get your husband soon."

149. After saying thus, the prince mounted his horse and accompanied by both of them reached his kingdom in a trice.

150. He stood near the garden at the outskirts of the city and sent the son of Nāga to his kinsmen who had usurped the royal throne.

151-153. He went and informed them: "Let Indrasena be released quickly. Candrāṅgada, his son, has come from the world of serpents. You may soon abdicate the throne with no further hesitation. If not, the arrows of Candrāṅgada will take away your vital breaths. Diving into the waters of Yamunā, he went to the palace of Takṣaka. After getting his assistance, he has come here from that world."

154. On hearing these words intimating the details, the enemies became agitated and said, "Very good!"

155. Everything was conveyed to Indrasena such as the return of the lost son and other things. They congratulated him on his regaining the throne. The kinsmen, as expected, became frightened inordinately.

156. All the citizens met the prince at the garden and conveyed the news to the king. They were sumptuously rewarded.

157. On hearing that the prince was approaching, the king's eyes welled with tears of joy. Due to great joy, the queen too did not see properly things (in front in the) world.

158. All the citizens, the elderly ministers, the priests received him, embraced him and took him to the king.

159. With great festivity and pomp, the prince entered the palace, bowed down to his parents and shed tears of joy.

160. For a moment, the king could not recognize his son who fell at his feet. Reminded by his ministers, he somehow raised him up and embraced him with a melting heart.

161. The prince bowed down to his mothers in due order. With increased affection, they offered their blessings to him and embraced him. He then duly honoured all the citizens.

162-163. Seated amidst them, he reported everything that happened to him, to his father, such as the friendship of Takṣaka, the jewel and other rich presents given by the king of serpents, all those divine things brought by that Rākṣasa and similar things.

164. On seeing and hearing the incidents in the life of his son, the king became thrilled. He thought that the conjugal bliss of his daughter-in-law was a thing acquired by propitiating Maheśvara.

165. The king of Niṣadha conveyed this good news of great auspiciousness to King Citravarmā through his spies and errand boys.

166. On hearing the delightful news soothing like ambrosia, he got up with excitement. Rewarding them with adequate monetary gifts, he began to dance with joy.

167. With eyes brimming with tears of joy he called his daughter to him and adorned her with ornaments removing the signs of widowhood.

168. There was a great celebration and rejoicing in the cities and villages of the country. Everywhere the people praised the pious conduct of Sīmantinī.

169. King Citravarmā invited Indrasena's son and offered his daughter to him going through the rites of marriage all over again.

170. With the jewels and other valuable things brought from the abode of Takṣaka, which were rare and inaccessible to human beings, Candrāṅgada adorned his wife.

171. With the divine unguent shining like molten gold and sweet scent spreading its fragrance ten Yojanas all round, she looked splendid.

172. Decorated with a never-fading garland having the colour and filaments of lotus coming from the wish-yielding Kalpa tree, the chaste lady shone all the more.

173. Having been reunited with his wife on an auspicious occasion, Candrāṅgada went back to his city blessed and congratulated by his father-in-law.

174. The eminent King Indrasena installed his son in his kingdom, propitiated Śiva by means of penance and attained the goal of those who practice self-control.

175. For ten thousand years King Candrāṅgada enjoyed various worldly pleasures along with his wife Sīmantinī.

176. She gave birth to eight sons and a beautiful daughter. Worshipping Maheśvara, Sīmantinī sported about with her husband. Day by day the conjugal bliss got augmented due to the Monday observance (worship of Śiva).

Sūta said:

177. This wonderful narrative has been told by me. I shall further recount the greatness of the pious Monday observance.

CHAPTER NINE

The (Spiritual) Power of Sīmantinī[1]

The Sages said:

1. Well! Well! O blessed one, what has been narrated by you is excellent. It behoves you to relate another tale equally wonderful.

Sūta said:

2. In the land of Vidarbha, formerly, there was an excellent

1. The chapter further describes how due to this Vrata, the spiritual power of Sīmantinī became so great that a male Brāhmaṇa who tried to cheat her by posing as a woman was permanently transformed into a woman.

Brāhmaṇa well-known as Vedamitra. He was intelligent and a knower of the meanings of Vedic and scriptural texts.

3. He had another Brāhmaṇa friend named Sārasvata. Both of them hailing from the same place were very friendly to each other.

4. Vedamitra's son was a virtuous boy named Sumedhā. The son of Sārasvata was well-known as Somavān.

5. Both the boys were of the same age. Their status was equal and they dressed alike. They were consecrated simultaneously and their level of learning was the same.

6-7. They learned all the Vedas along with their *Aṅgas* (ancillaries), Tarka, Vyākaraṇa, Itihāsas, Purāṇas and all the Dharma Śāstras. completely and became adepts in all arts and sciences. They became great scholars just in their childhood. With their good qualities they satisfied their parents.

8. Once those two excellent Brāhmaṇas called their sons when they had completed their sixteenth year and had grown into handsome youths and said thus with pleasure:

9-10. "O sons, you have learned everything early in your childhood. You have become very brilliant. Now is the proper time for the marriage. You must please the king of Vidarbha with your learning. Get ample sums of money from him and celebrate your marriage."

11. On being told thus by them, the two Brāhmaṇa boys went to the king of Vidarbha and pleased him with their good qualities.

12. When the king was satisfied with their academic achievement, the Brāhmaṇa boys revealed to him that being devoid of money, they had done this (presentation of their academic achievement) for the sake of marriage.

13. After coming to know of their intention, the king laughingly told them something with a desire to know some facts concerning common people.

14-17. "There is a queen of Niṣadha, Sīmantinī, a chaste lady. She worships Mahādeva along with Aṁbikā on Mondays. On that day, with great devotion, she honours great Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas, along with their wives, and offers them plenty of wealth. So one of you shall go there in the graceful guise of a woman and the other shall be her husband. You will thus become a Brāhmaṇa couple. Thus like a bride and a bridegroom you go to Sīmantinī's abode. Take food there and after getting sufficient amount of money, come to me."

18-23. On being ordered thus by the king, the Brāhmaṇa boys

became frightened. They replied: "We are afraid to do an act like this. One who acts fraudulently in respect to deities, elders, parents and royal households under a false idea perishes along with his family. How can a man enter deceitfully the inner apartments of kings? Even well-concealed deception becomes exposed (sooner of later). Good qualities acquired earlier by means of good education, decent habits and regulated activities are lost at once if the person concerned takes to a crooked path.

Sin, censure, fear and enmity—these four always belong to persons adopting deceitful means. Therefore, we, born in sinless families, of a good conduct, will never resort to acts praised by rogues."

The king said:

24. The word of command of deities, elders, parents and king should not be disobeyed. One should never think of going against it.

25. Whatever has been ordered by these, good or bad, should immediately be carried into practice by those who wish to be free from error, even if they are afraid.

26. Don't you know, we are kings. You are accepted as subjects. Prosperity comes to those people who act according to the behests of kings; otherwise there is fear of danger.

27. Hence, do as I have commanded you to do without delay.

On being told thus by the king, they consented to it out of fright.

28. The king made Somavān, the son of Sārasvata, to disguise as a female with (appropriate) garments, ornaments, collyrium and other things.

29. With an artificial role of a woman imposed on him by the use of unguents, ear-rings and other ornaments, with his eyes made smooth and shining by means of collyrium, he immediately became one shining like an excellent maiden of comely form and features.

30. At the bidding of the king the Brāhmaṇa boys became a Brāhmaṇa couple and went to the land of Niṣadha thinking, 'Let come what may.'

31. Along with other excellent Brāhmaṇas with their wives, they went to the royal palace on Monday. They were received with hospitality and their feet were washed.

32. The queen honoured the excellent Brāhmaṇas and their

wives individually after making them sit on excellent seats.

33. On seeing the Brāhmaṇa boys who approached her, she recognised that they were a couple in disguise. She smiled within herself. But she considered them as Gaurī and Maheśvara.

34. She invoked Sadāśiva, the Lord of Devas, in those Brāhmaṇas, and goddess, the mother of the universe, in their wives.

35. With mental and bodily purity, she adored the excellent Brāhmaṇas with sweet scents, garlands, fragrant incense and waved lights and then made obeisance to them.

36-39. She offered them nice dishes to eat. There was milk pudding with adequate sugar and honey soaked in ghee in gold pots. There were pleasing vegetable dishes, cooked rice of sweet-smelling flavour, sweetmeats and heaps of baked pies, Śaṣkulīs (fried coiled snacks), Saṁyāvas (Halwas), Kṛśaras cooked with black gram pulses and numerous other delicacies. The soups were delicious and sweet-smelling. The water was very cool. She served all these foodstuffs to those excellent Brāhmaṇas with great devotion. After offering them cooked rice with excellent curds, she delighted them immensely.

40-41. After the excellent Brāhmaṇas had taken their food and rinsed their mouths, the queen bowed to them and offered betel leaves and monetary gifts in a befitting manner. She gave cows, gold pieces, garments, jewels, gemset ornaments and necklaces. Again she bowed to them and sent away the excellent Brāhmaṇas.

42. Of those two Brāhmaṇa boys, one was worshipped by her after identifying her with the Daughter of Himavān. The other one was adored with the thought that he was Mahādeva. Both of them went off after taking leave of her after the customary obeisance had been made.

43. (The Brāhmaṇa boy disguised as a woman) forgot her real nature as a man. She became enamoured of the other excellent Brāhmaṇa boy. She was overcome with passion and was love-lorn, being tormented by Kandarpa (god of Love).

44-45. "O my lord of large lovely eyes, handsome in every limb! Stop, stop. Where are you going? Don't you see me, your beloved?

Here (we are approaching) this beautiful forest teeming with great trees in full bloom. I wish to sport in dalliance with you in this forest as I please."

46. On hearing these words uttered by her, the other Brāhmaṇa

boy thought that his friend was joking and continued his walk ahead as before.

47-48. Again the girl said: "Stop, stop. Where do you intend to go? Come and embrace me and enjoy me tormented inordinately by Smara (god of Love). I am your beloved. Let me kiss your lips and drink (the honey) thereof. I have been afflicted by the arrows of Smara. I am incapable of going ahead."

49. On hearing these words not heard before, he became suspicious. He looked behind and saw her proceeding towards him. He was immediately astonished.

50-51. 'Who is this beautiful woman with eyes like petals of lotus, heavy protruding breasts, slender belly and bulging hips? She is as tender as sprouts. Is it possible that my friend has been changed into an excellent female? I shall ask him.' Thinking thus he said:

52-53. "O friend, you appear strange and unusual in form, features and qualities. You speak strange words like an excited lustful woman. You are a celibate religious student, conversant with Vedas and Purāṇas, son of Sārasvata, quiescent, with sense-organs controlled. Why do you speak like this?"

54-55a. On being addressed thus, she said: "O lord, I am not a man. I am a girl Sāmavatī by name. I am here to give you sexual pleasure. If, O my lover, you have any doubt, see my limbs."

55b. On being told thus, the other boy secretly examined her.

56. On seeing her with natural luxuriant tresses of hair, beautiful with hips and breasts and comely in form, he become slightly agitated with love.

57. Soon the learned boy controlled himself with great effort, and subdued the straying mind. For a short while he was wonderstruck and did not say anything.

Sāmavatī said:

58. I hope your doubt is set at rest. Then come on, enjoy me. See this forest, O dear lover, ideally suited for sexual dalliance with an excellent girl.

Sumedhā said:

59. Do not speak like this. Do not violate the bounds of decency like an intoxicated one. Both of us have understood the scriptural texts fully. Why do you speak thus?

60. Is this adoption of the way of an (adulterous) paramour

worthy of you who have studied scriptures, have power of discrimination, belong to a noble family?

61. You are not a woman. You are a learned Brāhmaṇa. Know your own self through your own soul. Or is this a calamity invited by ourselves, because we did commit the blunder of deceiving the queen?

62. At the bidding of a roguish king, we have deceived our own parents. We have been guilty of impropriety of conduct, the fruit (result) of which is now reaped by us.

63. All improper acts are detrimental to the good of man. You who are born as the son of a Brāhmaṇa, a scholar, have undergone the despicable state of being a woman.

64. One who leaves off the beaten track and strays into a forest, is sure to be pricked with thorns. One who has abandoned the company of his own people, is sure to be injured by beasts of prey.

65. Hence be sensible and follow me to the house quietly. Perhaps, by the grace of gods and Brāhmaṇas, your womanhood will disappear.

66. Or, if ordained by fate, this womanhood clings to you, O lady of excellent complexion, you can have sexual dalliance with me after being given to me in marriage by your father.

67. Alas! This is indeed a miracle! A misery! The disastrous effect of sinful behaviour! Or is it the power of the king, acquired by him as a result of the propitiation of Śiva?

68. Although admonished thus by him many times, that girl, in her agitated state, embraced him forcibly and kissed his sprout-like lips.

69. Though molested thus by her, the bold Sumedhā somehow brought the newly transformed woman to their house and reported everything then.

70. On hearing this, the Brāhmaṇas became infuriated, besides being grief-stricken. Accompanied by those two boys, they came to the king of Vidarbha.

71-76. Then Sārasvata said to the king who had perpetrated the roguish act:

"O king, see my son who obeyed your command. Acting at your bidding, these two perpetrated a despicable thing. It is my son who experiences the bitter fruit by turning into a woman that is hateful.

My family line is broken today. My ancestors have become disappointed. To one devoid of a son, no (heavenly) world is within reach, as the offering of balls of rice and other consecratory rites come to an end.

He has to forgo the lock of hair on the crown, the sacred thread, deerskin, girdle of Muñja grass, staff and water-pot which are all signs of a celibate religious student and to fall into this miserable plight.

The Brāhmaṇical cord, the Sāvitrī Mantra, the daily ablution, the performance of Sandhyā prayers, the Japa and the adoration—all these have been discarded, as he is transformed into a woman. O king, tell me, where has he to go for salvation?

On account of you, my family line is broken, the Vedic path has been lost. O king, tell me, can there be any permanent salvation for me, who have an only son?"

77. On hearing the words spoken by Sārasvata the king was wonderstruck at the power of Sīmantinī.

78. Calling together all great sages of unmeasured lustre, the king propitiated them and requested them for the return of manhood to the boy.

79. They said: "Who can change the will of Pārvatī and Śiva and the greatness of their devotees?"

80-81. Then the king took the great sage Bhāradvāja and at the instance of Bhāradvāja went to the temple of Aṁbikā accompanied by those two excellent Brāhmaṇas and their sons.

As per advice of Bhāradvāja, he served and worshipped the goddess with severe vows and observances.

82. Thus, for three nights, the king eschewed completely his meals and remained engrossed in meditating upon Pārvatī. By obeisances and different kinds of prayers and hymns he propitiated Gaurī who removes the distress of those who seek refuge in her.

83. The goddess became pleased with the devout kıng, and to him revealed her form having the lustre of ten million moons.

84. Then Gaurī asked the king: "Tell me, what do you wish?" He said: "The manhood of this boy may be restored"

85. The great goddess said again: "What has been done by my devotees cannot be altered even in tens and hundreds of thousands of years."

The king said:

86. "This Brāhmaṇa has an only son. Now his line has been

broken on account of this event. How can such a man as this attain happiness without a son?

The goddess said:

87. With my favour he will have another excellent son endowed with learning and modesty. He will live long. He will be pure-hearted.

88. Let this daughter of that Brāhmaṇa, named Sāmavatī, be united in wedlock with Sumedhā and let her enjoy all pleasures of love.

89. After saying this the goddess vanished. Those persons with the king at their head, went to their respective places, abiding by his order.

90. The Brāhmaṇa Sārasvata ere long obtained a son better than the previous one with the favour of the goddess.

91. He gave his daughter Sāmavatī to Sumedhā in marriage. For a long time the couple enjoyed happiness.

Sūta said:

92. Thus the power of Queen Sīmantinī, a great devotee of Śiva, has been narrated and the greatness of Śaṁbhu too described.

93. Further too I shall describe the power of Śiva's devotees, striking one with wonder. I shall state it succinctly. To those who listen, it is a source of all auspiciousness.

CHAPTER TEN

Bhadrāyu Resuscitated[1]

Sūta said:

1. Astonishing is the constructive ability of Śivā. Miraculous is the activity of Śiva. Wonderful is the greatness of Śiva; wonderful is the utterance of Śiva.

2. Strange is the conduct of the devotees of Śiva; it is destructive of sins; verily it is the means of heavenly pleasures and salvation.

1. The aim of this chapter is to describe the efficacy of *Bhasma* (sacred ash). As usual the motif of rebirth is used as an explanation of the suffering of Bhadrāyu and his mother. Śivayogin who was served by them in the last birth resuscitates and cures Bhadrāyu and his mother.

I shall describe it.

3. In the land of Avantī, there was a certain Brāhmaṇa named Mandra. He was of easy-going temperament in worldly affairs, one ruled by women and eager to amass wealth.

4. He had entirely abandoned Sandhyā prayers and regular ablutions. He was very fond of sweet scents, garlands and garments, attached to women of immoral ways, straying often into crooked paths like Ajāmila of yore.

5. He hovered round a prostitute named Piṅgalā, sporting about with her day and night. Of uncontrolled passion, he constantly remained in her house itself.

6. Once, while the Brāhmaṇa was staying in her house, a pious-souled Śivayogin named Ṛṣabha came there.

7. Having seen him arrived and considering (his arrival) the result of their powerful merit, that harlot and the Brāhmaṇa, both of them worshipped him.

8. They made him sit on a big pedestal covered with a shawl and a cloth. Devoutly they washed his feet and applied (sprinkled) the water over their head.

9. They honoured him with various services by offering cordial welcome, Arghya, obeisance, sweet scents, flowers, raw rice grains etc. and joyously gave him a meal.

10. After he had taken his food and rinsed his mouth, they made him sit on a bedstead covered with a good bedsheet and offered him betel leaves.

11. Urged by an auspicious fate, they devoutly massaged his feet. By various acts of attendance and service, they entertained him for a long time.

12. Thus honoured by both of them, the Śivayogin of great splendour spent a night there and went away in the morning duly respected by them.

13. As time went on thus, the Brāhmaṇa passed away and the harlot too died when the time came and attained a state deserved by her acts.

14. Carried by his own actions the Brāhmaṇa entered the womb of Sumati, wife of Vajrabāhu, king of Daśārṇa (Western Malwa, M.P.).

15. On seeing that senior queen blessed with pregnancy, the other queens, the cowives administered poison to her fraudulently.

16. Even after consuming that terrible poison, the queen did

not die, as fate had ordained it. She had to undergo sufferings more unbearable than death.

17. The chaste lady of excellent complexion was afflicted with great pain. At the proper time, she gave birth to a son.

18. Barely more than ten days old, the prince who had already been affected by the poison, suffered the most acute pain and went on crying day and night.

19. The mother of the child was also afflicted with wounds all over the body. Thus both of them suffered acute pain as a result of the poison.

20. They were taken to physicians and treatment was given. Despite a number of efforts they did not regain normal health.

21. The queen afflicted with severe pain never had sleep at night. She became further emaciated by being miserable due to the affliction of her son.

22. A few months passed by like this. On seeing the mother and the child alive but no better than dead, the king thought thus within himself.

23-24. 'These, my wife and son, have come here from the veritable hell. Crying out due to their incurable illness, they cause sleeplessness (to everyone). I shall have recourse to some means certainly in regard to these two sinners who cannot die or live. Let them suffer from their own sins.'

25. The king was enamoured of the other queens and their sons. Having decided thus, he called his charioteer and made him take them far away in the chariot.

26. They were abandoned somewhere in a lonely spot in the forest by the charioteer. Distressed very much by hunger and thirst, they suffered acute pain.

27. Carrying the boy, she faltered at every step and gasped for breath; she trembled apprehensively and cursed her own previous actions (and fate).

28. Now her limbs were pricked and bruised by thorns. Her hair was dishevelled. Now she took fright at the roaring sound of tigers. Now she was chased by pythons.

29. She was ridiculed and rebuked by ghosts, vampires and Brahmarākṣasas. Rushing through hedges, the soles of her feet were cut by razor-like sharp stones.

30. Wandering thus in the thick forest, the queen luckily reached the path of merchants frequented by cows, horses and men.

31. Proceeding along that path a very long distance with stress and strain, she saw the city of Vaiśyas abounding in men and women.

32. There was a great Vaiśya named Padmākara who was an eminent merchant and leader of that city. He was as though another Kubera.

33. The domestic slave of that lord of Vaiśyas saw the queen coming from far. She approached her.

34. After learning the full details herself, she introduced the suffering queen and her son to her lord and master.

35. On seeing her excessively ill, herself burdened with a child that also was suffering much, he took them aside and himself asked the details specifically.

36. She told him all the details. Realizing their pitiable plight, the leader of the Vaiśyas sighed repeatedly.

37. Treating her like his own mother, he accommodated her in a secret apartment very near his house and honoured her with everything essential such as food, drink, clothes and bedding.

38. Though the queen went on staying in that house well guarded and looked after, she did not find any relief from wounds, pulmonary consumption and other ailments.

39. Then, after a few days, as fate had destined it, the boy, afflicted with wounds died, setting at nought the efficacious treatment of all the physicians.

40. When her son died, the queen was excessively grieved. She fell into a swoon like a creeper dashed to the ground by an elephant.

41. Luckily, she regained consciousness, but shed tears profusely drenching her breasts. Though the Vaiśya ladies nearby tried to console her, she lamented much in the excess of her sorrow.

42-43. "Oh dear one, dear one, Oh my son, Oh saviour of my life, a full moon unto the royal household and the delighter of my own self! But, Oh prince, where have you gone leaving me, your mother, helpless and miserable, already abandoned by all the kinsmen? Verily my vital breaths depend upon you."

44. Who could have consoled that poor lady with a dead child? She continued to lament uttering words like these that increased the worries and sorrow (of others as well).

45. In the mean time, Ṛṣabha, the Śivayogin, mentioned before, came there as the sole physician for her misery and sorrow.

46. That Yogin was duly honoured by the leader of the Vaiśyas with the Arghya ready in his hands. He then went near her as she continued to lament and spoke thus:

Ṛṣabha said:

47. Oh dear child, why do you cry for no reason at all, with your intellect confounded and deluded? Who among many is born in the world? Who is dead? Tell me now.

48. This body and other objects like it have characteristics similar to the bubbles of water. There is agitation and excitement in some place. There is peace elsewhere. There is restful state again.

49. Hence when the bubble-like body vanishes in death, learned men do not feel sorry, because there is no scope or reason for that sorrow.

50. Living beings are evolved by *Guṇas* (*Sattva* etc.). They wander about in accordance with their own Karmas. They are being dragged by Time (Death). They are involved in the *Vāsanās* (impressions left behind by Karmas).

51. The three *Guṇas* including *Sattva* etc., take their origin from *Māyā* (delusion). The bodies are born due to them. Once born, they have the characteristics similar to those (of *Māyā*).

52. Helpless by itself, a creature chased by *Vāsanā*, attains godhood through *Sattva*; human form through *Rajas* and brutehood through *Tamas Guṇa*.

53. The soul undergoes repeatedly states not easily foreseen, involving happiness and sorrow as consequences of the Karmas in the present worldly existence.

54. There are ups and downs even in the case of Devas whose life span is of a duration of a Kalpa. In the case of human beings subject to innumerable ailments they are even more.

55. Some say that the cause of the body is Kāla (Time); some say that it is Karma; some say the Gaṇas bring about the body. But the body is common (to all).

56. (On the whole) this body with five constituents (the elements) is a product of Kāla, Karma and/or Guṇas. Learned men are not delighted on seeing one born nor are they worried on seeing it dead.

57. The creature is born in the unmanifest; it gets dissolved in the unmanifest; only in the middle does it appear to be visible

(though transitory) like water bubbles.

58. The destruction of an embodied being is already decided the moment it enters the womb. As ordained by fate, after being born, it may continue to live or die all of a sudden.

59. Some die within the womb; some are stillborn; others die immediately after birth; in some places young men die and in some when they attain old age.

60. The soul gets its body in accordance with its previous Karma; it experiences happiness and misery also in accordance with it (Karma).

61. Some body takes shape when, urged by Māyā and its efficient energy, the parents indulge in a sexual act. This body (so born) may be male, female or eunuch.

62. A creature is born bearing the writing on his forehead by the Creator, specifying his span of life, and extent of happiness, misery, merit, sin, learning and assets.

63 It does not behove you to grieve over anything as the (effects or fruits of) Karmas cannot be evaded, Kāla (god of Death) cannot be dodged and no object is permanent.

64. Where is fixity and stability in a dream? Where is truth and permanence in a magic feat? Where is the continuity in autumnal clouds? Where is perpetuity in the physical body?

65. Your previous lives are hundreds, thousands and millions. Since you do not know the ultimate truth, you have thus great misapprehension and delusion.

66. (You do not know) to whom you have been a daughter? To whom have you been a mother? To whom you had been a wife in your transmigration through millions of births?

67. The body is constituted of the five elements. The skin, the blood and the flesh make it stay together. It is filled and over-spread by suets, marrow and bones. It is the receptacle of urine, faeces and phlegm.

68. O deluded woman! It does not behove you to feel sorry if you consider your son as another body—a waste product of your own body.

69. If anyone can surmount death by means of efforts, how do you account for the death and disaster of all those learned men of yore?

70. No learned man can avoid ultimate death by means of penance, learning, intelligence, spells, herbs and elixirs.

71. One creature faces death today; another tomorrow, O lady of excellent countenance. Hence, as to the death or destruction of the body, of perishable organs, you do not deserve to feel sorry.

72. Death is ever present at hand. Tell me where is (can be) the happiness of embodied beings. When a tiger stands before them, do beasts relish their mouthfuls of fodder?

73. Hence, O lady of excellent countenance, if you wish to conquer birth and old age, seek refuge in Umā's Consort, the Lord of all, the conqueror of Death.

74. As long as an embodied being does not seek shelter in the lotus-like feet of Śiva, so long will he face the terrible fear of death, the fear from birth and old age.

75. When the mind becomes detached and devoid of cravings, after experiencing miseries in the extremely terrible world, Maheśvara should be meditated upon.

76. To a person mentally imbibing the juicy elixir of meditation of Śiva, there cannot be any lurking thirst for the liquor of mundane affairs.

77. When the mind is rid of all entanglements and is restrained by absence of desire and when it is turned towards the feet of Śiva, a being has no further birth.

78. Hence, O fair lady, do not make your mind affected with grief and delusion. It is the sole means for you to meditate on Śiva. Worship Śiva.

Sūta said:

79. Thus enlightened by the Śivayogin with consoling words, the queen bowed down to the lotus-like feet of the preceptor and replied.

The queen said:

80. What other goal can I have except death, O holy Sir? My son is dead. I have been forsaken by all my kinsmen. Further, I am distressed by a fell disease.

81. Hence I wish to die following this child. I am contented and have achieved my object inasmuch as I have seen you today at the moment of my death.

Sūta said:

82. On hearing her words, the Śivayogin, a storehouse of mercy, remembered the previous service and approached the dead body.

83. He took some ash previously charged with Śiva's Mantras, and scattered it into his open mouth. He united the dead body with vital breaths.

84. That boy regaining the vital breaths opened his eyes slowly. Having got back the strength of his sense-organs as before, he cried out with a desire for breast-milk.

85. On seeing the resuscitation of the dead boy, all the people were struck with wonder. The leading citizens became glad.

86. The queen was filled with delight. Her eyes became excited as though she was intoxicated. With eyes welling with tears, she quickly caught hold of her son.

87. Embracing him, she reached the highest point of bliss. Like one in sound sleep after a laborious work, she did not know herself or others.

88. Further, Ṛṣabha, the Yogin, applied the ash on the body of the mother as well as on that of the son, which were covered with poisonous wounds.

89. When the ash was thus applied, the bodies became transformed into divine ones. Their forms became lustrous like those of Devas.

90. The excellent pleasure of the queen was hundred times more than the happiness of the people of meritorious deeds when heavenly pleasures and prosperity are bestowed on them.

91. When she fell at his feet, the affectionate Yogin Ṛṣabha lifted her up and consoled her. When she was fully free from misery he said:

92-94."O child! O great queen! Live for endless years. As long as you are alive, you will never meet with old age. O chaste lady, this son of yours will become renowned by the name Bhadrāyu. He will regain his (lost) kingdom. O lady of pure smiles, continue to stay in the apartment of the Vaiśya till your son completes his study."

Sūta said:

95. Thus reviving the prince by the efficacy of the ash, the Yogin, Ṛṣabha, went away to the land of his choice.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Ṛṣabha's Advice to Bhadrāyu

Sūta said:

1-2. I have already spoken to you about the harlot named Piṅgalā. Due to the merit of the worship of Śiva, after leaving off the old body, she was reborn as daughter of Sīmantinī, wife of Candrāṅgada. She was endowed with physical beauty and liberal-mindedness. She was known by the name Kīrtimālinī.

3. In the apartment of the prominent Vaiśya, Prince Bhadrāyu grew up endowed with excessive refulgence like the sun in summer.

4. The prominent Vaiśya had an excellent son named Sunaya. He became companion of the prince.

5. The prince and the Vaiśya boy were intimate friends. Lovely in limbs and bedecked in gemset ornaments, they used to play about in diverse ways.

6. The prominent Vaiśya got all the consecratory rites of the prince as well as his own son performed through Brāhmaṇas on an elaborate scale.

7. Their sacred thread ceremony was celebrated at the proper age. Engrossed in attending upon their preceptor in all humility, they mastered various branches of learning one by one.

8. When the prince completed his sixteenth year, the same Yogin, Ṛṣabha, came to his abode.

9. The queen and the prince repeatedly bowed down to the Śivayogin and gladly adored him.

10. Duly honoured by both of them, the eminent Yogin became pleased in his mind. With a compassionate heart, he spoke addressing the prince:

Śivayogin said:

11. O dear boy, I hope you are hail and hearty. I hope your mother is free from illness. I have no doubt that you have learnt all arts and sciences.

12. I believe you are always eager to serve your preceptors. Don't you remember me, your preceptor who brought you back to life?

13. When the chief of Yogins said thus, the queen in all humility made her son fall at his feet and spoke thus:

14-15. "O preceptor, this is your son. You are his father as you resuscitated him. He may please be accepted by you sympathetically as your disciple. Hence extend your protection to him who is helpless, being virtually abandoned by his kinsmen. It behoves you to instruct him duly in the path of the good."

16. Thus propitiated by the queen, the highly intelligent Śivayogin instructed the prince in the noble way of living.

Ṛṣabha said:[1]

17. The eternal Dharma (righteous conduct) has been laid down in Śrutis, Smṛtis and Purāṇas. It has to be always resorted to by people in a manner according to one's specific caste and stage of life.

18. Resort to the path of the good, dear boy. Follow the conduct of life of good people. Do not disobey the command of Devas. Do not slight Devas contemptuously.

19. Always entertain devotion to cows, Devas, preceptors and Brāhmaṇas. Even if a Cāṇḍāla comes as a guest, honour him suitably on all occasions.

20. Do not abandon truth on any occasion even when your very life is endangered. But on occasions do not hesitate to utter a lie for the sake of preserving the lives of cows and Brāhmaṇas.

21. O mighty one, give up greed and covetousness in respect to other men's assets and wives, the properties of gods and Brāhmaṇas and rare objects.

22. O highly intelligent one, show earnestness and eagerness in respect to stories of saintly persons, conduct of gods, vows and observances of the good, scriptures of the good and practice of pious rituals.

23. O sinless one, be free from slothfulness in respect to the daily bath, Japa, Homa, study of the Vedas, libations to the ancestors and the worship of cows, gods and guests.

24. Scrupulously avoid anger, hatred, fear, stubbornness, backbiting, persistence in evil, crookedness, arrogance and agitated excitement.

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1. VV 17 ff give the prevalent concepts of *Sadācāra* for a prince.

25. You may very well follow the duties of a Kṣatriya, but avoid unnecessary and purposeless injury to others. Eschew futile enmity, useless talk and slandering others.

26-28. Always try to avoid hunting, game of dice, drinking bouts, women and cuckolds. Always refrain from too much of eating, too much of talk and too much of play. Try to achieve the maximum of learning, utmost faith, highest merit, keenness in memory, earnestness, extensive popularity and unflinching courage.

29. Be steadfast in the love of your own wife; be wrathful towards your enemies; be covetous of gathering merit; and cultivate intolerance towards the unrighteous.

30. Be hostile to heresy; be friendly to the good; don't be led away by evil counsels; and be deaf to the words of a backbiter.

31. Shun from a great distance, a rogue, the wrathful, the perfidious, the ruthless, the deceitful, the fickle and the wicked, so also the fallen, an atheist and the crooked.

32. Do not boast about yourself; understand the implications of hints and gestures; do not be very much attached to wealth and the entire family.

33. Always have faith in the words of your chaste wife, mother, father-in-law, good people, and preceptor.

34. Be alert in guarding yourself; be unerring, steadfast in your observances; do not place too much of faith even in your servants at any cost.

35. O highly intelligent one, do not kill one who has trusted you, even if he happens to be a thief; do not be suspicious of sinless ones; do not swerve from the path of truth.

36. With money, life, intellect, power and strength protect the helpless, the miserable, the old, women, children and the innocent.

37-38. Do not kill even an enemy worthy of being killed, if he seeks refuge in you; give up even your head if anyone earnestly begs for it, be he one deserving it or not deserving it, mean or noble. Exerting with great effort always earn fame.

39. Fame alone is the ornament of kings and learned men. Prosperity comes out of good fame. Merit results from good fame.

40-42. The world shines with good reputation like the moon with the moonlight. Give up like an insignificant blade of grass, collections of elephants, horses and gold as well as mountain-like heaps of jewels, if they are defiled by ignominy.

Oh, forgive the anger of the mother, the fury of the father, the wrath of the preceptor, wastage of wealth by sons, and the guilt of Brāhmaṇas. Do what is beneficial to them in such a way that the favour of Brāhmaṇas is ensured.

43-45. Excellent Brāhmaṇas should extricate the king entangled in difficulties. You must always resort to that activity whereby longevity, fame, power, happiness, wealth, merit and progress of the subjects can be ensured.

Consider carefully the place, the time, the power, what should be done and what should not be done and ardently do that always which should be done. Do not offend anyone. Avoid harassment of others.

46-48. Attack thieves and the wicked by means of good policy and enforcement of power (at the proper time and place).

Do not be in a hurry with respect to daily ablution, Japa, Homa, and the rites pertaining to Devas and ancestors. But do not make haste to go to sleep and be quick in finishing (your) meal.

O highly intelligent one, always utter words full of civility and politeness, but not befitting a rogue, truthful, pleasing to the minds of the people and few but meaningful. Be fearless everywhere—in regard to enemies and adversities.

49-53a. Be afraid of the Brāhmaṇa community but do not be so in stern administration (in dispensing justice).

You must treat equally kinsmen, relatives, Brāhmanas, wives and sons (not partial to one against another of the same type). So also treat alike all the persons sitting for food in a row.

Do not be averse to good advices of excellent persons, to meritorious stories, to learned discussions of a virtuous nature.

You must always stay in places of purity and near spots of sacred waters, near sacred Tīrthas, in famous places, in places abounding in Brāhmaṇas and in a great country of auspicious features.

Never live in a place where there is a whore, where there is a lecherous libertine and in a bad place crowded by mean people.

53b-57a. Though you solely depend upon Śiva, the lord of the three worlds, do adore all the Devas, honouring their respective (festival) days.

Be always pure, always efficient, always calm, always steady, always subduing the six enemies (anger etc.). Stay alone, O sinless one.

Promptly offer obeisance to Brāhmaṇas conversant with the Vedas, calm and brilliant ascetics, sacred trees, sacred rivers, meritorious holy spots, great lakes, cows, bulls, gems, chaste young women, and domestic deities.

57b-59. Get up early in the Brāhma Muhūrta, wash the mouth with pure heart, bow down to your own preceptor, meditate on the Lord, Consort of Umā, think of Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmī, Brahmā, Vināyaka, Skanda, Kātyāyanī, Goddess Mahālakṣmī, Sarasvatī, the Guardians of Quarters including Indra and sages of pure fame. After meditating on all these, bow down to the rising sun.

60-62. Use scents, flowers, betel leaves, vegetables, ripe fruits etc. after first offering them to Śiva.

Whatever is offered, whether edible, pleasing or fresh, whatever is done, whatever Japa is performed, ablution taken and Homa, penance performed—dedicate all these to Śiva.

While taking food, reading or reciting, lying down, sporting about, seeing, hearing, speaking or taking anything think of Śiva alone.

63. Your pair of strong hands must have Rudrākṣa as the shining bracelets. You must have the three parallel lines of white ash on the forehead*. You must repeat the five-syllabled king of Mantras (i.e. *namaḥ śivāya*) and you must always meditate on the feet of Paśupati. Thus you must enjoy yourself.

64. Thus, O dear one, the compendium of Dharma (virtuous conduct) has been succinctly revealed. It has been explained more elaborately in other Purāṇas.

65. Now for your benefit I shall explain another thing—the *Śiva Kavaca* ('Amulet of Śiva'). It is a secret, esoteric doctrine of all the Purāṇas; it is pure and sacred, destructive of all sins; it bestows victory and rids one of all calamities.

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* '*Mālāntarāla*' is obviously a misprint for *Bhālāntarāla* as *bh* (भ) and *ma* (म) in Devanāgarī script are similar in form.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Description of Śivakavaca[1]

Ṛṣabha said:

1. After bowing down to Mahādeva, the Lord who pervades the entire universe, I shall describe the (mystic) amulet of Śiva (that which is auspicious) which protects men in every respect.

2. One should be seated in a clean place in a suitable posture. He should curb his sense-organs, control his vital breaths and meditate upon the immutable Śiva.

3. He should meditate on Maheśa, the embodiment of supreme bliss, stationed within the lotus of the heart, who has pervaded the entire ethereal space by means of his own brilliance, who is the primordial being, subtle and infinite, and who is beyond the ken of the sense-organs.

4. The devotee should protect (himself) by means of Śivakavaca, shaking off all the bindings (i.e. effects) of Karmas through meditation, with his mind immersed for a long time in the bliss of consciousness and with his self composed by means of the *Nyāsa* (ritualistic touch of the limbs) of the six syllables.

5. "May the Lord, the soul of all deities, protect me fallen into the deep well of worldly existence. Let his divine name, the *Mūla Mantra* (original mantra) of great excellence, shake off all my sins accumulated in the heart.

6. May the *Cidātmā* ('soul having consciousness as its essence') of cosmic form, consisting of refulgence and bliss, protect me everywhere. May that Īśvara who is minuter than the minutest, who is single with extraordinary power, protect (me) from every type of fear.

7. May that Giriśa of eight cosmic forms, who sustains the universe in the form of earth, protect (me) from the earth. May he, who enlivens men in (his) form of the waters, protect me from waters.

8. May that Kālarudra who, at the end of the Kalpa, dances,

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1. '*Kavaca*' means an armour. The different aspects of the deity are believed to protect different parts of a man's body by touching it while uttering that particular portion of the incantation.

The procedure of Śiva-Kavaca is given in this chapter.

exhibiting all his diverse sports after burning all the worlds, protect me from forest-fire, from the fear of violent gusts of wind and from all distresses.

9. May the four-faced, three-eyed, *Tatpuruṣa*[1] (form of Śiva) having the lustre of lightning and (molten) gold, who has *Vidyā* (learning), *Vara* (boon), *Abhīti* (freedom from fear) and the axe in his (four) hands always protect me standing in the East.*

10. May *Aghora* (form of Śiva) protect in the Southern Quarter. Śiva who holds an axe, the Vedas, a goad, a noose, a trident, a skull, a drum and a rosary string, and who has three eyes and four faces and blue complexion (may protect me).

11. May Śiva protect me in the West, who is three-eyed, four-faced, *Sadyojāta* of great power, who has the lustre of jasmine, the moon, a conch and crystal, who is noted as holding in his hands the Vedas, a rosary string (and indicating by the other two hands the Mudrā) of granting boon and of freedom from fear.

12. May that three-eyed *Vāmadeva* with four beautiful faces protect me in the Northern Quarter, who is ready to give boons, holds a rosary garland, assures freedom from fear and possesses an axe in his hands and whose complexion resembles the filaments of a lotus.

13. May that five-faced, white-lustred Īśāna, the supreme light, protect me from above, who has in his hands the Vedas, *Abhaya Mudrā* indicating freedom from fear, *Mudrā* showing granting of desired boon, a goad, an axe, a noose, a skull, a drum, a rosary and a trident.

14. May the moon-crested Lord protect my head. Let the Lord with an eye in the forehead, protect my forehead. Let the Lord who deprived Bhaga of his eyes, protect my eyes. May Viśvanātha (the Lord of the universe) protect my nose.

15. May the Lord whose glory has been sung by the Śruti, protect my ears; may the Skull-bearing Lord always protect my cheek; may the Five-faced Lord always protect my face; may the Lord with the Vedas in his tongue, protect my tongue.

16. May the blue-necked Giriśa protect my neck. May the

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1. VV 9-13 invoke each of the five faces of Śiva with its particular form for protection.

* *V.L.* (Śiva) who is positioned in the East.

Lord with Pināka in his hand protect the pair of my hands. May the Lord with Dharma in his arms (lit. Dharma-armed) protect my armpit and may the Destroyer of Dakṣa's sacrifice protect my chest.

17. May the Lord with the lord of mountains for his bow, protect my belly; may the Destroyer of Madana protect my middle; may the Father of Heraṁba protect my navel and may Lord Dhūrjaṭi protect my hips.

18. May Kubera's friend protect the pair of my thighs; may the Lord of the universe protect the pair of my knees. May the Bull-emblemed Lord protect the pair of my calves, and may the Lord whose feet are worthy of being worshipped by the Suras, protect my feet.[1]

19. May Maheśvara protect me in the first watch of the day; may Vāmadeva protect me in the middle watch; may the Three-eyed Lord protect me in the third watch of the day, and may the Bull-bannered Lord protect me in the last watch of the day.

20. Let the Moon-crested Lord protect me in the beginning of the night; let Gaṅgādhara protect me at mid-night; may the Lord of Gaurī protect me at the close of the night; may Mṛtyuñjaya protect me on all occasions.

21. Let Śaṅkara protect me when I stay within; let Sthāṇu always protect me when I stay outside; let the Lord of Paśus protect me in between and let Sadāśiva protect me all around.

22. Let the sole Lord of the universe protect me as I stand. Let the Lord of Pramathas (attendants) protect me as I am walking along; let the Lord who can be known (only) through the Vedāntas protect me as I am seated; and let Śiva protect me when I lie down.

23. May the Blue-necked Lord protect me along the roads; may the Destroyer of the Three Puras protect me along the impassable regions of the mountains etc. Let the Hunter of the Deer of enormous power protect me while in exile, in forests etc.

24. May Vīrabhadra of majestic and powerful fury at the end of the Kalpa, who makes the Cosmic Egg tremble through his manifest boisterous laughter, protect (me) from the inevitable fear of the terrible army of the enemies of sea-like expanse.

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1. VV. 14 ff invoke Śiva to protect different parts of the body. The power or aspect of Śiva has generally some relevance to the part of the body prayed for protection.

25. With the sharp edge of his terrible axe let Mṛḍa chop off a hundred Akṣauhiṇīs of weapon-wielding assailants, consisting of thousands, ten thousands, hundred thousands and ten millions of terrible troops of foot-soldiers, cavalry and elephants.

26. Let the trident of the Destroyer of the Three Puras blazing with the flames of the fire at the time of the ultimate annihilation, kill the Dasyus (barbarous tribes of thieves). Let Pināka, the bow of the Lord, terrify all the beasts of prey such as tigers, lions, bears and wolves.

27. May the Overlord of all the worlds destroy evil dreams, ill omens, wretchedness, dejection, famine, vicious indulgence, unbearable infamy, distress of violent upheavals, fear from poison, ailments and the distress due to malignant Planets.

Om, obeisance to Lord Sadāśiva who comprises all entities (and principles), who sports about in all entities, who is the sole creator of all the worlds, who is the sole ruler of all the worlds, who is the sole destroyer of all the worlds, who is the sole preceptor (and admonisher) of all the worlds, who is the sole witness unto all the worlds, who is the secret of all scriptural texts, who is the bestower of all boons, who is the destroyer of all sins and distresses, who brings about freedom from fear to the entire universe, who is the sole benefactor of all the worlds, who has the moon for his crest jewel, who has his own permanent refulgence, who is free from attributes, who is incomparable, who is devoid of forms, who is devoid of fallacious reasoning, who is free from ailments, who is free from *Prapañca* (mundane life), who is free from stigmas, who is free from mutually opposing pairs, who is devoid of contact, who is free from impurities, who is free from procedures, who has a permanent form, whose prosperity and dignity is incomparable, who requires none else to support him, who is ever pure, enlightened, perfect, undivided existence-knowledge-bliss, who is excessively quiescent, whose form is manifest brilliance. Obeisance to that Lord.

Be victorious, be victorious, O Mahārudra, O great and terrible one, O auspicious appearance, O destroyer of the forest-fire of misery, O extremely terrible one, O Kālabhairava, O terrible one at the end of the Kalpa, O wearer of the garland of skulls, O terrible one with a thousand terrible hands wielding weapons like skull-headed baton, sword, shield, noose, goad, Ḍamaru drum, trident, bow, arrows, clubs, *Śakti* javelin, *Bhiṇḍipāla* (a sling-like

instrument), *Tomara* (iron club), *Musala* (mallet) *Mudgara* (mace), *Paṭṭiśa* (sharp-edged spear), axe, *Parigha* (iron bolt), *Bhuśuṇḍī* (a sort of missile), *Śataghnī* ('Hundred-killer'—a rocket-like missile), discus etc. etc.; O terrible one with curved teeth in the mouth, one who has with his terrible boisterous laughter rocked (with reverberations) the regions of the Cosmic Egg; one with serpent kings for ear-rings, one with serpent kings for necklace, one with serpent kings for bracelets, one who wears the hide of a majestic elephant, O Mṛtyuñjaya ('Conqueror of Death'), three-eyed one, the destroyer of the three Puras, O one with uneven number of eyes, O lord of the universe, O cosmic-formed one, O bull-vehicled one, O lord with even poison constituting an adornment, O lord having faces all round, do protect me everywhere (in every direction).

Burn, burn down the fear of great death; destroy, destroy (utterly) the fear from accidental death; exterminate, exterminate (completely) the fear from ailments; remove (totally) the fear from poisonous serpents, and the fear from thieves. Kill, kill my enemies; tear, tear (them) down to pieces with your trident; cut, cut (them) down with your axe; pierce, pierce (them) with your sword; chop off, chop off (them) with your skull-topped club; pound, pound (them) with the mallet; hit them with arrows, hit (them) with arrows; terrify, terrify the Rākṣasas; drive away, drive away the goblins; terrify, terrify the evil spirits of Kūṣmāṇḍa, Vetāla etc. as well as pestilences and Brahma-Rākṣasas. Make me free, make me free from fear. Console me, console me who am frightened. Lift me, lift me from the fear of hell. Enliven me, enliven me, free from hunger and thirst. Nourish me, nourish me; gladden me, gladden me. I am miserable and distressed. Cover me with Śiva's (spiritual) coat of mail. O Three-eyed One, O Sadāśiva, obeisance to you, obeisance to you, obeisance to you."

Ṛṣabha said:

28. Thus the Śivakavaca has been narrated by me. It bestows boons. It ends all harassments and torments. It is a great secret unto all embodied beings.

29. If a man always wears this excellent Śivakavaca, he will never have fear from anywhere due to the blessings of Śaṁbhu.

30. A man, the term of whose life is exhausted, one on death-

bed and one attacked by great ailments quickly regains happiness and attains long life.

31. He who wears Śivakavaca that ends poverty entirely and increases auspiciousness, is honoured even by Devas.

32. He is rid of multitudes of major and minor sins. On the death of the body he attains Śiva by the power of Śivakavaca.

33. You too, O dear child, wear the excellent Śivakavaca with great faith. It has been given to you by me. You will attain welfare and prosperity quickly.

Sūta said:

34. After saying thus, Yogī Ṛṣabha gave the prince a conchshell reverberating with great sound and a sword that destroys enemies.

35. Further he charged some ash with a Mantra and smeared it all over his body. He gave him double the strength of six thousand elephants.

36. By the power of the ash the prince got strength, prosperity, courage and memory. He shone like the autumnal sun in his glory.

37-42. As the prince stood before him with palms joined in reverence, the Yogī said: "This sword that I have given you has the majestic efficacy of austerities and spells. If you show this sword pointing to anyone, clearly he will immediately die even though the enemy may be the god of Death himself.

Your enemies who hear the loud sound of this conch will drop down their weapons and fall senseless.

This sword and the conch are of divine origin. They are destructive of the hostile armies. They increase the splendour and heroism of your own allies and armies.

With the power of these two and Śivakavaca you will have the great strength of twelve thousand elephants. Further due to the efficacy of the ash applied you will defeat the army of enemies. Regaining the hereditary throne, you will protect this earth."

43. After instructing Bhadrāyus thus perfectly along with his mother, the Yogī started on his travel without restraint, after he was honoured duly by them.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Marriage of Bhadrāyus

Sūta said:

1. The powerful king of Magadha of mighty arms was an enemy of Vajrabāhu, the ruler of Daśārṇa.

2. Well-known by the name Hemaratha, he was proud of his military ability and mighty arms. Surrounded by a large army he laid siege to Daśārṇa.

3. The unassailable commanders of his army overran Daśārṇa and looted the wealth. Some set fire to the houses.

4. Some took away the wealth, some children and others abducted the women. Still others took away the cattle wealth, some, the stock of grain and other useful things. Some destroyed the plants in the gardens and others the domestic pleasure-groves.

5. Desirous of abducting the women and seizing cattle wealth, the king of Magadha destroyed that kingdom after surrounding that city of Vajrabāhu.

6. On seeing the entire city in throes, Vajrabāhu set out for fighting in the company of his own army.

7. King Vajrabāhu and others led by the ministers fought with the Magadhas and smashed the enemy's army.

8. Wielding a great bow and wearing the coat of mail, Vajrabāhu seated himself in a chariot. Showering volleys of arrows, he played havoc with the enemy.

9. On seeing the king of Daśārṇa himself fighting in the battle with unbearable valour, the soldiers of Magadha surrounded him.

10. After fighting for a long time, the Magadhas of excessive valour destroyed his army and won the battle.

11. Some broke his chariot. Some cut down his bow. One killed his charioteer and another cut down his sword.

12. Taking the king by force after the sword and the bow had been cut off, the charioteer was killed and the chariot broken, the powerful soldiers bound him angrily.

13. After defeating the entire army and the cabinet of ministers, the Magadhas entered the city in the full flush of their victory.

14. They seized everything— horses, men, elephants, camels, other animals, all assets, all young women, girls of beautiful limbs etc.

15. They bound down the queens and thousands of women slaves of the king. They looted the treasury full of gems, raising their weapons aggressively.

16. After destroying the city thus and taking away the women, cattle, wealth etc. they forcibly trussed Vajrabāhu and placed him in another chariot. Then they went away.

17. After the terrible destruction of the kingdom had taken place resulting in great chaos and tumult, Bhadrāyus, the prince of great might, heard this news.

18. On hearing that his father was bound down by the enemies and that his father's queens were abducted and that the entire kingdom of Daśārṇa was rendered desolate, he roared like a lion.

19-21. He took the Vaiśya boy as his assistant and took up the sword and the miraculous conch. Properly covering himself with the armour, the prince mounted his horse with an ardent desire for victory. He hurried to the place occupied by Magadhas. He saw the place being burned. The women, children and cows held prisoners were crying aloud. He found desolation everywhere, everyone struck with fear. This enraged the prince. In his utter fury, he penetrated the enemy's army. Drawing the bowstring as far as his ears, he showered volleys of arrows.

22. On being struck with the arrows of the prince, the enemies rushed towards him quickly and hit him with powerful arrows.

23. Though hit with numerous arrows and missiles by the enemies proud of their fighting capacity, the bold prince did not flinch because he was well-protected by Śivakavaca.

24. Enduring the shower of missiles, the prince entered the enemy's army as playfully as an elephant and killed footsoldiers and elephants, destroying innumerable chariots.

25. The prince killed a warrior in chariot along with his charioteer. He got into the chariot with the Vaiśya boy as his charioteer. Like a lion roaming among herds of deer, the bold prince moved about in the battlefield.

26. All the powerful commanders, heroic warriors of the enemy furiously raised their bows and rushed against him, a single person.

27. As they rushed forward, the prince stood steady lifting up the terrible sword. He marched against the great warriors himself, displaying his valour.

28. Merely at the sight of that dazzling sword that resembled the terrible tongue of the god of Death, the commanders of the enemy army

fell down dead due to its power.

29. All those who set their eyes on the sword dazzling in the battlefield, fell down dead like worms struck by thunder.

30. Thereafter, for the destruction of all the armies, the prince of powerful arms blew his conch of loud report, filling the earth and the firmament as it were (with its sound).

31. Only by hearing that sound of the conchshell that appeared to be smeared with poison, the enemies swooned and fell on the ground.

32. All those who were seated on horsebacks, chariots and elephants fell senseless in a moment with all their inherent strength drained off by the sound of the conch.

33. Fully conversant with the injunctions in the scriptural texts, the prince ignored those who fell down senseless dropping their weapons and lying down like so many corpses. He did not kill them.

34. He released his father who had been bound down in the battlefield. He also released all the queens held captive by the enemies.

35-36. He released the wives of the chiefs of ministers and other citizens. Women, girls, children, cattle, wealth etc. were freed from the fear of the enemies. Thereafter, he moved among the soldiers of the enemy and seized their women.

37-38. He gathered together all the horses as swift as wind and mind, all the elephants resembling mountains, chariots made of gold and women-slaves of beautiful faces. After gathering these things quickly and much of his wealth, he tied down Hemaratha, the king of Magadha, who was defeated.

39. He imprisoned his ministers, vassal kings and the chief commanders and brought them into the city very soon thereafter.

40. The chief ministers and trustworthy leaders of the army who were previously defeated in battle and hence fled to various directions returned now.

41. On seeing the valorous exploit of the prince, all of them were struck with wonder. They considered him to be some excellent Sura who had come down to the earth for some purpose.

42-44. "Wonderful indeed is our great luck. Surely this is the result of our penance. We who were dead have been revived into life by some hero. Can this be someone with supernatural powers acquired by Yoga? Or one with austerities? Or an immortal being? Indeed a great superhuman task has been accomplished by him. Indeed Gaurī is his mother and Śiva (his) father. With infinite strength he has conquered nine Akṣauhiṇīs."

45. While they, being overwhelmed with joy, were thus praising him among themselves, he was questioned by the body of ministers and he revealed facts about himself.

46. Overwhelmed with love and affection, he bowed down to his father who came there filled with surprise and delight and hence shedding tears of joy.

47. The king, who was lovingly saluted by his son, embraced him promptly and spoke with overpowering love:

48-53. "Who are you, O highly intelligent one? A Deva? A human being? Or a Gandharva? Who is your mother? Who is your father? Which is your native land? What is your name?

Wherefore have you approached us sympathetically and released us along with our wives who were bereft of splendour as though dead, after being tied up by the enemies?

Whence did you get this heroism, courage, refulgence and excellent strength? You appear to be ready to vanquish the three worlds including Devas, Asuras and human beings.

I shall not be able to become free from indebtedness to you of excellent energy, even in the course of a thousand more births, along with these wives and kinsmen.

My mind clings to you alone with love, leaving off these sons, these wives, this kingdom and this city.

O dear boy, tell me everything, O saviour of my life. The very life of these wives of mine depends upon you."

Sūta said:

54-57. On being asked thus by his father, Bhadrāyu spoke to him: "This Vaiśya boy named Sunaya is my friend. I am staying in his beautiful apartment along with my mother. My name is Bhadrāyus. Later on I shall tell the details to you. Welfare unto you. Enter the city along with your wives and friends. Leave off all fear from the enemies. Sport about as you please. Till I come back, do not release these enemies. I am going now to my house at once."

58. After saying this to the king, Bhadrāyu, the prince, took leave of him. He returned to his abode and reported everything to his mother.

59. Delighted much, she embraced her son with tears welling in her eyes. The leader of Vaiśyas too embraced the prince lovingly and honoured him.

60. Vajrabāhu, the eminent king, entered his palace accompanied

by his wives, sons and ministers and derived immense pleasure.

61-63. As the day dawned, Ṛṣabha, the most excellent one among Yogins, approached Candrāṅgada, the husband of Sīmantinī. Secretly he told him about the birth and superhuman exploits of Bhadrāyus. Then he advised him thus: "Give your daughter Kīrtimālinī to Bhadrāyus."

64. King Candrāṅgada invited Bhadrāyus and gave Kīrtimālinī to him in an auspicious Muhūrta.

65. After the marriage the prince sat on the golden throne and shone like Moon in the company of Rohiṇī.

66. The Niṣadha king invited his father Vajrabāhu. When he entered the city, he received and honoured him along with his ministers.

67. There he saw Bhadrāyus, the destroyer of enemies, duly married. When he fell down at his feet, he embraced him lovingly.

68-69. "This hero has granted me my life. He is the destroyer of my enemies. Still this hero of immense valour remains unknown to me in regard to his parentage. O King Candrāṅgada, your son-in-law is extraordinarily powerful. I wish to know the truth about his family and nativity."

70. On being requested thus by the king of Daśārṇa, the overlord of Niṣadha took him to a lonely place and laughingly told him:

71-77. "O king, this is your own son who had been ailing much in infancy. He was abandoned by you in the forest along with his sickly mother. Wandering in the forest along with her son, the woman fortunately reached a Vaiśya's abode and was protected by him since then. Then your son afflicted with too many ailments died. The dead boy was resuscitated by a certain eminent Yogin.

By the supernatural power of that Yogin, Ṛṣabha by name, the mother and the son attained a form similar to that of gods.

By means of the sword and conchshell capable of killing enemies, both given by that Yogin, he vanquished his enemies in the battle. He himself was protected by Śivakavaca.

He has the strength of twelve thousand elephants. He is a past-mater in all branches of learning and he has now become my son-in-law. Please take him and his pious mother to your city. You will attain excellent welfare."

78. After narrating all these things, Candrāṅgada brought Vajrabāhu's eldest queen well-decorated in ornaments from the inner apartments.

79. After hearing everything and seeing directly, the king became ashamed and despised his own action done out of foolishness.

80. He derived excess of pleasure on seeing them thus. With hairs

standing on end he embraced both of them.

81-82. He was duly honoured and congratulated by the Niṣadha king who gave him a grand dinner along with his ministers. Taking the eldest crowned queen, the son and the daughter-in-law, Vajrabāhu went to his city with all his retinue.

83. Bhadrāyus reached his father's palace with great excitement. He delighted all the citizens.

84. In due course the father passed away. The youthful Bhadrāyus of wonderful valour ruled the entire earth.

85. He released Hemaratha, the king of Magadha, from imprisonment. In the presence of Brāhmaṇa-sages, the two pledged for a long-standing friendship.

86. In his previous birth the prince had honoured the Śivayogin, well-known in all the three worlds. Hence he could surmount many unbearable miseries. Ultimately he got the kingdom and enjoyed pleasures along with the daughter of Candrāṅgada.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Bhadrāyus Gets Śiva's Favour

Sūta said:

1. After ascending the throne, the heroic king Bhadrāyus once entered a beautiful forest along with his wife.

2-5. During the charming spring season, he sported with his wife in that forest where Aśoka trees had put forth full-blown flowers and fresh tender sprouts; where in hedges jasmine flowers had blossomed and bees were humming and hovering; where lovers indulged in great festivities as the fragrance of fresh Kesara (saffron) flowers (as if) captured them; where Aśoka and Tamāla trees had thickly grown in clusters together with buds recently sprouted; where there were many pavilions of spring creepers stooping down due to the weight of flowers; that was rendered beautiful by mango trees with lustrous sprouts and flowers; where male cuckoos continued to coo, fluttering about in the Punnāga groves.

6. Not far (from him), the excellent king saw a Brāhmaṇa couple shouting and running about, chased by a tiger.

7-8. "O great king, save us, save us, O king, O ocean of mercy. This tiger is rushing with great speed to devour us. O king, protect us,

lest this tiger huge like a mountain, terrifying all living beings, should gobble us."

9. On hearing this lamentation, the king took up his bow, but the tiger intercepted them and seized that woman.

10-12. The woman was shouting, "Oh my lord, Oh my beloved lord! Alas! Śambhu, the lord of the universe!" Even as she was lamenting thus, the terrible tiger seized her. With sharp arrows the king hit the tiger, but it did not flinch with pain like a big mountain with showers of rain. Unafflicted by the king's missiles, that mighty tiger grasped the woman forcibly and fled away.

13-21. On seeing his wife carried away by the tiger the Brāhmaṇa became excessively grief-stricken. He lamented. "Oh my beloved girl! Oh my chaste wife! How could you go to the other world leaving me alone? How can I have any desire to live after abandoning the wife more beloved than the vital breaths? Oh king, where are your great missiles? Where is your oft-praised great bow? Where is your strength supposed to be more than that of twelve thousand elephants? Of what use is your conch? Your sword? Of what avail is your erudition in Mantras and miraculous weapons? Of what avail is your effort? Of what avail is your superior power and influence?

All those things, whatever else you possessed, have become futile because you were incapable of preventing the wild animal of the forest. The greatest duty of a Kṣatriya is that of protecting (others) from injury. Hence your hereditary duty having perished, what can be the use of your continuing to live? Kings of duty-consciousness carry out the protection of the distressed who seek refuge in them, by offering their riches and even vital breaths. Those devoid of the same are comparable to the dead ones.

Mendicancy is better than householdership in the case of rich men, if they are not inclined to make gifts to others. Death is better than life to those incapable of protecting the distressed. A king should better swallow poison or enter fire, if he becomes incapable of protecting miserable, helpless persons who seek refuge in him."

22. On hearing his lamentation and blunt rebuke of his prowess, the king thought thus himself feeling sorry for the whole event.

23-26. 'Alas! My manliness has been lost today, because the fate is against me. My reputation is gone. I have incurred sin of great magnitude. Unlucky and worried I am with my action demanded by the occasion having gone away. Indeed my riches, kingdom and longevity will dwindle. The riches, enjoyments, progeny, wives and assets of

unmanly ones appear and disappear in a moment due to fate. So, even risking my dear life, I shall make this grief-stricken Brāhmaṇa who is deprived of his wife, rid of his grief.'

27. Coming to this decision mentally, the excellent king Bhadrāyus fell down at his feet and spoke consolingly:

28-29. "Take pity on me, O Brāhmaṇa, on a base Kṣatriya deprived of his energy and prowess. O highly intelligent one, leave off your grief. I shall give you the object of your desire. This kingdom, this queen and this body of mine—all these are for you. Tell me what you desire.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

30-31. Of what use is a mirror unto one who is blind? Of what use is a house unto one who sustains himself by begging? Of what use is a book unto one who is a fool? Of what use is money unto one who has no wife? My wife has gone away. I have not enjoyed sensual pleasures sufficiently. Hence give me this crowned queen of yours for my pleasure.

The king said:

32-34. O Brāhmaṇa, is this a virtuous act on your part? Is this the command of the elders? Having sex with other men's wives is unheavenly (leading to hell) and ignominous.

There are the donors of wealth, kingdom, horses and elephants. Somewhere the donor of one's own body can be found, but never the donor of one's own wife.

The sin incurred by one through the enjoyment of other men's wives cannot be washed off even by hundreds of expiatory rites.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

35-36a. I can destroy by means of my power of penance even the terrible sin of a Brāhmaṇa's slaughter and imbibing liquor. Why not then that of defiling other men's wives? Hence give me this wife of yours; otherwise you are sure to go to hell due to your inability to protect persons distressed due to fear.

36b-37. The king became afraid at these words of the Brāhmaṇa. He then thought thus, 'Being unable to protect is greater sin. Far better than that is the gift of the wife. Hence I shall make a gift of my wife to the excellent Brāhmaṇa and become freed from sins. Immediately

I shall jump into the fire, so that my reputation may stay long.'

38-40. Having resolved thus he kindled a great fire. Inviting the Brāhmaṇa, he made a gift of his wife to him along with water offerings. He took his bath and became physically pure. After bowing down to all the gods, he went round the fire twice and meditated on Śiva with great concentration. As this devotee whose mind was devoutly attached to his feet was about to fall into the fire, Śiva, the Lord of the universe, manifested himself before him.

41-43. The king saw in front of him, Lord Śiva seated on his bull, the lord who had three eyes and five faces; he held the Pināka bow and had the moon's digit for an ornament on the head. The tawny matted hairs were hanging loose. He was standing in the middle, dazzling with the splendour of ten million suns. He was as pure and white as a lotus stalk. He had hide of elephant as his garment. His head was washed by the waves of Gaṅgā. He shone with serpent kings for these ornaments: necklaces, bracelets, rings, crown, armlets and ear-rings. He showed in his hands a trident, skull-headed baton, axe, shield, deer, gestures of freedom from fear and granting of the boon and the Pināka bow. The Blue-throated Lord appeared before him.

44. Soon divine showers of flowers fell from the sky. Divine musical instruments were sounded. Devas sang and danced.

45. Nārada and other sages as well as Sanaka and other celestial sages came there; so also did Indra and other Guardians of the Quarters as well as the pure Brāhmaṇa-sages.

46. Seated in their midst along with Umā, Mahādeva showered the essence of his compassion on the king who remained bowing down with devotion.

47. The king began to eulogize with palms joined in reverence; his mind became (as if) expanded due to the delight of seeing him. Tears of joy drenched his limbs. Hairs stood on end and the words were choked in his throat (with emotion). Thus he eulogized:

The king said:

48. I bow down to the immutable lord who has no lord above him; I bow down to the chief and great one with unmanifest good qualities, to him who has no other cause but is the cause of all causes. I salute the great Śiva, the quiescent one, the embodiment of knowledge and bliss.

49. You are the witness unto the universe, the creator of this world. Your splendour is rooted therein and you abide in the heart. Hence persons knowing the proper procedure seek you by means of diverse

Yogic practices involving restraint of the mind and its activities.

50. You are one to those who conceive you as one and single; you are multiformed to those who think of you that way. Your region shrinks from the path of the mind since it is beyond the ken of sense-organs; it is the witness and it shows the flurries of rising and setting.

51. How can my words solely depending on Guṇas and merged in Prakṛti, be adequate to eulogize you who are difficult to be attained by speech and intellect, as you are the embodiment of the supreme soul free from delusion?

52. Still those words may support my devotion. Afflicted with the excessively terrible forest-fire of worldly existence, I always resort to thy lotus-like feet capable of destroying the distress of those who bow down. I bow down for the purpose of quelling the fear of repeated births.

53. Obeisance to you, to the lord of Devas. Bow to Śaṁbhu, the great lord. Obeisance to the lord in the form of the Trinity, the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

54. Obeisance to the primordial form of the universe, to the first witness unto the universe. Hail to the principle of the nature of pure existence, to the one who is knowledge and bliss through and through!

55. Obeisance to the lord immanent in all the individual bodies for his abode. Obeisance to the power of soul distinct from the body. Obeisance to you, incapable and the apparently capable of huge size.

56. Obeisance to you free from illusory existence; to the permanent one, to the internal soul, embodiment of truth and knowledge, to the pure one, to the distant one, to the one devoid of Karmas in their entirety.

57. Hail to the lord to be known (only) through the Vedāntas, to one abiding at root (source) of the Vedas; obeisance to one whose activities are in secluded spots (i.e. incomprehensible); obeisance to the lord from whom the Guṇas recede.

58. Obeisance to the lord of benevolent prowess; to the lord bestowing benevolent fruits and benefits; obeisance to the infinite one, to the great one, to the quiescent one in the form of Śiva.

59. Obeisance to Aghora, to the terrible one, to the destroyer of terrible clusters of sins. Obeisance to the great Bharga, the destroyer of the seeds of worldly existence. Obeisance to the one who has destroyed delusion, to the one who has all the Guṇas of the Ātman fully manifest.

60. Save me, O lord of the worlds. Protect me, O Śaṅkara, the eternal one. Save me, O Rudra, O Virūpākṣa. Save me, O Mṛtyuñjaya ('the vanquisher of Death'), O immutable one.

61. O Śaṁbhu having the moon for your crest-jewel, O lord of Gaurī of quiescent form, with the Sun, the Moon and fire constituting the three eyes! O Gaṅgādhara, O destroyer of the demon Andhaka, O lord of meritorious fame, O lord of goblins, O mountain-dweller, perpetual obeisance to you!

Sūta said:

62. On being eulogized thus by the king, Lord Maheśvara in the company of Pārvatī became pleased. The storehouse of mercy then said:

Īśvara said:

63-66. O king, I am satisfied with your devotion and the meritorious eulogy. With the mind not straying elsewhere, you have always worshipped me. It was to test your devotion that I assumed the form of the Brāhmaṇa and came near you. The woman apparently seized by the tiger is this goddess, the daughter of the Lord of Mountains (Himālaya). The tiger is only a creation of Māyā and hence it could not be wounded by your arrows. Desirous of seeing the depth of your courage, I requested for your wife. I am delighted with the devotion of this Kīrtimālinī as well as that of yours. O bestower of honour, I shall gladly grant you any boon. Seek even if it is inaccessible.

The king said:

67. This itself is a great boon that you, the greatest lord, have come within the range of my vision despite the fact that I have been surrounded by the distress of worldly existence.

68-69. You are the leader among the bestowers of boons, O lord. I do not want any other boon except this: Make all these—this queen and I, my mother and father, the Vaiśya Padmākara and his son Sunaya—your perpetual attendants.

Sūta said:

70. Thereafter Queen Kīrtimālinī of great fortune bowed down devoutly and propitiated Giriśa. She requested for this excellent boon.

The queen said:

71. I request that my father Candrāṅgada and my mother Sīmantinī, O great lord, always reside near you.

72. The lord of Gaurī, fond of his devotees, said, "Let it be so." After gladly granting them the boon as they desired, he vanished in a moment.

73. The king too, after getting the favour of the Trident-bearing Lord along with the Suras enjoyed all covetable worldly pleasures in the company of Kīrtimālinī.

74. After ruling the kingdom for ten thousand years without any hindrance to the increase of his prowess, he entrusted the kingdom to his sons and attained the greatest region of Śaṁbhu.

75. The eminent king Candrāṅgada and the queen Sīmantinī devoutly worshipped Giriśa and went to the region of Śaṁbhu.

76. This narration of the good qualities of Śaṁbhu is holy and destructive of sins. It is a great secret and highly wonderful. He who narrates this to learned men and reads himself with mental and physical purity shall get all the requisites for enjoyment and in the end he will go to Śiva.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Efficacy of the Holy Ash

Sūta said:

1. The majestic power of Ṛṣabha, the Śivayogin, has been described. Now I shall narrate the supernatural power of another Śivayogin.

2. I am describing briefly the greatness of the holy ash too, on hearing which sinful people will become contented.

3. There was a Śivayogin named Vāmadeva.[1] He had performed great austerities. He was free from the mutually opposing pairs (like pleasure-pain). He was free from the adverse effects of the Guṇas. He was quiescent, free from contaminating contacts and impartial (in viewing things and persons).

4. He took delight in his own soul. He had subdued anger. He

1. This Vāmadeva is different from the Vedic seer and the one mentioned in Mbh, *Vana* 43-48.

was devoid of wives and household. His movements used to be unpremeditated. He used to observe silence. He was contented. He had no possessions of his own.

5. He used to apply ash all over his body. He was adorned with matted hair. He wore bark garments or deerskin. He used to accept only alms.

6. Once, while he was moving about in the world out of the desire of blessing all people, he entered by chance a very terrible forest named Krauñcāraṇya.

7. In that forest devoid of human beings, there was a certain awful and terrifying Brahmarākṣasa who was perpetually distressed with hunger and thirst.

8. On seeing that auspicious-souled Yogin entering, the Brahmarākṣasa who was overwhelmed with hunger, rushed at him in order to eat him.

9. The eminent Yogin did not move even after seeing him terrifyingly rushing towards himself with his open mouth, terrible, curved fangs and an unwieldy huge body.

10. That terrible forest-dweller rushing on towards the unruffled Śivayogin seized and squeezed him with his arms.

11. The moment he touched his limbs, all his sins were destroyed. The terrible Brahmarākṣasa recollected something and became distressed.

12-14. Just as by touching Cintāmaṇi an iron piece transforms itself into gold, just as by entering the river Jaṁbū even clay becomes gold, just as by approaching the Mānasa lake crows become swans, just as by drinking once the divine elixir a man attains godhood, so also by their vision, personal touch etc., noble souls suddenly sanctify sinful persons. Hence the contact with the good is very difficult to attain.

15. The forest-roaming terrific being who was previously distressed with hunger and thirst, suddenly became contented and full of bliss.

16. When a small particle of the holy white ash sticking to his (sage's) body touched him, the thick mass of his sins and Tāmasic (cruel) traits of character got annihilated. The Brahmarākṣasa of terrible misdeeds was reminded of his previous birth. Thereupon he fell down at the lotus-like feet (of the Yogin) and spoke:

The Rākṣasa said:

17. O great Yogin, be pleased with me; be pleased, O storehouse of mercy; be pleased, O ocean of the nectar of bliss, with those who

are distressed with worldly existence.

18. Where am I, the terrible one of a sinful mind striking terror into all living beings? Where is the vision of yours, the noble-souled, merciful sage of great magnificence and brilliance?

19. Lift, lift me, for I have fallen into the sea of misery. Merely by your presence at hand great bliss is increasing further.

Vāmadeva asked:

20. Who are you, a forest-roaming terrible Rākṣasa? Why are you staying here? How did you get into such a painful and excessively terrible plight?

The Rākṣasa replied:

21. I am now a Rākṣasa but in my twenty-fifth previous birth, I was the ruler of the Yavana country (? Greek). I was called Durjaya, the heroic one.

22. I was vicious-souled and highly sinful. I was arrogant and self-willed, a man of wicked conduct out to punish everyone, a fierce, ruthless, mischievous person.

23. In my youth I was excessively lecherous, without any control over my passions, though I had many wives. Further, I was guilty of another heinous, sinful act.

24. Everyday I wanted to enjoy a fresh woman. At my bidding, my servants brought women from all countries.

25. Everyday I used to enjoy a woman and throw her into the inner apartment, ready to catch hold of another woman for the morrow.

26. In this way, women were brought from my own and foreign countries, from all excellent countries, villages, cities and colonies and were enjoyed day-by-day. A woman once enjoyed was never enjoyed again.

27. The women enjoyed by me were not enjoyed by others at all. Kept within the four walls of the inner apartment, they used to bewail day and night.

28. When women of Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra castes were carried away by me, Brāhmaṇas residing in my kingdom ran away along with their wives.

29. Women having husbands alive, virgins, widows, nay women in their menses too, were brought and enjoyed by me, a damned lustful soul.

30-32. Three hundred Brāhmaṇa women, four hundred women from royal families, six hundred Vaiśya women and a thousand Śūdra maidens, a hundred Cāṇḍāla women, a thousand Pulinda (hill tribes) girls, five hundred Śailūṣīs (actresses), four hundred Rajakīs (washerwomen) and innumerable prominent harlots were enjoyed by me in the course of my wicked life. Still my lust was not satisfied fully.

33. Even in the prime of my youth, great ailments such as pulmonary consumption etc. entered me (my body) bent upon enjoying evil worldly pleasures, haughty and addicted to imbibing liquor.

34. Having fallen a prey to foul diseases, harassed by enemies, devoid of sons and forsaken by the servants and the ministers, I died as a result of my (evil) Karmas.

35. It is definite that if a man goes astray from the path of virtue, his span of life gets reduced, ignominy is enhanced, fortune dwindles into nothing and he undergoes a very wretched life. All the ancestral Manes certainly suffer a downfall from heaven.

36. Then I was taken to the abode of the god of Death by the servants of Yama. Then I was hurled into a deep pit in a terrible hell.

37. There in that terrible hell I remained for thirty thousand years drinking semen and tortured by the servants of Yama.

38. Then as a result of my remaining sins I was born as a Piśāca with a thousand penises in a desolate forest. I was perpetually agitated by hunger and thirst.

39. After being born as Piśāca I spent a hundred divine autumns. In my second birth I became a tiger terrifying to living beings.

40. In the third birth I became a python, and a wolf in the fourth birth. In the fifth birth I became a pig in the rubbish heap of faecal matter, and a chameleon in the sixth birth.

41. In the seventh birth I became a dog and in the eighth one a jackal. In the ninth a terrible *Gavaya* (blue ox) and in the tenth I became a deer.

42. A monkey in the eleventh, I was born as a vulture in the twelfth birth. I was born a mongoose in the thirteenth birth, and a crow in the fourteenth.

43. (I became) a bear in the fifteenth, a jungle cock in the sixteenth. I was born as a donkey in the seventeenth, and a cat in the eighteenth birth.

44. A frog in the nineteenth, and a tortoise in the twentieth birth. A fish in the twenty-first birth I became, and a mouse in the twenty-second birth.

45. I was born as an owl in the twenty-third, and a wild elephant in the twenty-fourth (birth). In this my twenty-fifth birth I have now become a Brahmarākṣasa.

46. Having nothing to eat I have become oppressed with hunger and I stay in this great forest. Now on seeing you come, I became eager to devour you, but at the mere contact with your body, I have remembered my previous births.

47. Now in your vicinity, I remember all the thousands of births gone before. I have become extremely disgusted but my heart is delighted.

48. How was such a power acquired by you, O highly intelligent one? By means of a severe penance or by frequenting holy places?

49. Is it by means of Yogic practice or is it due to the power of the Devas or by means of Mantras possessing infinite power. O holy sire, tell me the fact. I seek refuge in you.

Vāmadeva said:

50. This is the great power of the holy ash smeared on my body. Due to the contact with it your mind has become excellent, although your behaviour (so far) was Tāmasic.

51. Excepting the great Lord who else can know the efficacy of the ash? Just as the greatness of Śaṁbhu is inscrutable, so also is that of the ash.

52. Once there was a Brāhmaṇa in the Draviḍa land, devoid of all piety like you. He was foolish and deluded. He was reduced to Śūdrahood due to his vile deeds.

53. He used to practise thieving. He was devoid of good holy rites. He became enamoured of a Śūdra woman and became her paramour but at night he was killed by the Śūdra (husband).

54. Casually a dog with Bhasma clinging to its legs, walked over the dead body of that Brāhmaṇa that had been thrown out of the village.

55. Though he had fallen into a terrible hell, Śiva's servants attacked Yama's servants and took him away in an aerial chariot.

56. Approaching Śiva's messengers Yama asked, "Why do you wish to take this man, a great sinner?"

57-58. Those messengers of Śiva then replied: "See the dead body. The chest, the forehead and the armpit have been marked with the excellent Bhasma. Hence, at the bidding of Śiva, we have come to take him away. You cannot prevent us. Do not have any doubt in this regard."

59. After saying this to Yama, even as all the worlds were watching, the messengers of Śaṁbhu took the Brāhmaṇa to the world free from all ailments.

60. Hence this Bhasma, an ornament unto Śaṁbhu, the perfect destroyer of all sins in a trice, is always being applied by me.

61. On hearing the greatness of Bhasma thus, the Brahmarākṣasa became more eager to know the greatness with further details and he spoke thus:

62. "Well said, well said, O great Yogin. I am blessed by seeing you. O pious-souled one, release me from this terrible evil birth.

63. It seems that there remains a little merit earned by me formerly. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, with your favour I have become free.

64. In a certain birth as a king, a plot of land full of groves of plants was given to a devotee of Śiva by me, giving him thereby a means of sustenance.

65. The same thing was mentioned by Yama too: 'In your twenty-fifth birth, due to the contact with a certain Yogin, you will be released from the worldly existence.'

66. That merit has borne fruit today, which was acquired in previous births, albeit very little. Hence I was brought into touch with you in this desolate forest.

67. So kindly give me the Bhasma along with its Mantras. O ocean of mercy, lift me up though I had committed terrible sins and am undergoing worldly births and deaths of evil nature.

68. How is the Bhasma to be smeared? What is the requisite Mantra? What is the auspicious procedure? What is the proper time? Which place is proper? O preceptor, tell me everything.

69. Noble souls like you are always engaged in what is beneficial to the worlds. They do not wish for their own benefit. They are of the nature and quality of the divine wish-yielding Kalpa trees."

Sūta said:

70. On being requested thus by that terrible being roaming in the forest, the eminent Yogin, the knower of the truth, explained to him further the greatness of Bhasma.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Efficacy of the Holy Ash (Continued)

Sūta said:

1. O ye excellent sages, listen to the speech of Vāmadeva.

Vāmadeva said:

2-11 Once, out of his own free will, Parameśvara, the lord of spirits and goblins, Kālāgnirudra, the lord honoured by the entire universe, reached the top of Mandara mountain. It (the mountain) was full of multicoloured minerals, different species of animals and was densely covered with various trees and creepers.

Hundreds and millions of Rudras assembled all round and the Three-eyed Lord of Devas was seated in their middle.

Purandara, the excellent one among Suras, came there along with Devas. So also did Agni, Varuṇa, Vāyu and Yama, the son of Vivasvān, Citrasena and other Gandharvas, sky-walkers, serpents and others, Vidyādharas, Kiṁpuruṣas, Siddhas, Sādhyas, Guhyakas. So did Vasiṣṭha and other Brāhmaṇa-sages, Nārada and other celestial sages, noble-souled Pitṛs, Prajāpatis including Dakṣa. (So did) Urvaśī and the other celestial damsels, Caṇḍikā and other mothers, Ādityas, Vasus, Dasras (Aśvins), the highly powerful Viśvedevas, the other lords of spirits capable of annihilating the worlds, Mahākāla, Nandin, Śaṅkha and Pālaka, Vīrabhadra of great refulgence, Śaṅkukarṇa the mighty, the unassailable Ghaṇṭākarṇa, Maṇibhadra, Vṛkodara, Kundodara, the powerful Kumbhodara, Mandodara, Karṇadhāra, Ketu and Bhṛngiriṭi (came there).

12. The other huge-bodied lords of goblins of great energy came there. Some were black in colour, some white, some had the lustre of frogs.

13. Some were green, some gray, some smoke-coloured, some variegated, some yellow and some red. There were spirits of different colours with wonderful limbs, sporting in diverse ways and highly arrogant.

14. Different kinds of weapons were raised by them with their hands. They had many kinds of vehicles and ornaments. Some were tiger-faced, some hog-faced and some deer-faced.

15. Some had the faces similar to those of crocodiles; others were dog-faced; some others had the faces of jackals and yet others had their faces resembling those of camels.

16. Some had the faces of Śarabhas (fabulous animals of this name) and some, the faces of Bheruṇḍas (awful species of birds). There were many who had faces like those of lions, camels and cranes. Some were single-faced, some double-faced, some triple-faced and some had no face (at all).

17. Some were single-handed, triple-handed, penta-handed and some with no hands. There were spirits without feet, many-footed ones, many-eared ones and single-eared ones.

18. Some were single-eyed, some four-eyed, some tall ones, and some dwarfish ones—all these assembled all round the Lord and attended upon the Lord of Goblins.

19. Then the pious-souled, highly resplendent Sanatkumāra, the highly intelligent and the most excellent one among the sages, came there to see the Lord of the universe.

20-27. The Lord of Devas, the controller of the universe, had the lustre of ten million suns. His voice was as loud as that of the seven oceans agitated at the time of the great deluge. His majestic lustre was like that of the fire at the time of the ultimate annihilation. He was (as if) adorned with a mass of matted hairs. The eye in the forehead had never lost its refulgence. The brightness of the face was slightly bedimmed by the flames (from the eyes). The Lord shone with the crescent-moon that was his brilliant crest-jewel. He was wearing two ear-rings, the left one constituted by Takṣaka and the right one by Vāsuki. His great chin had a blue jewel. His neck was blue. The Lord of mighty arms shone with the serpents for the necklace. His bracelets, armlets and rings were all shining serpent kings. His girdle was illuminated with thousands of gems held together by an unending number of strings. The Lord was clad in tiger-hide and bedecked in mirror-like bells. The serpents Karkoṭaka, Mahāpadma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Dhanañjaya constituted his anklets producing jingling sound reverberating in his lotus-like feet. He held a spear, an iron club, a skull-headed club, a javelin, an axe and the bow (Pināka in his hands). He was unassailable. He could not be pointed out. His form was beyond the ken of imagination. As the Lord seated himself in the gemset throne, the great sage bowed down to him.

28. The innermost soul of the sage was refreshed and was as if breathing heavily with the weight of devotion. With palms joined in reverence and the shoulders bowing down in humility, he eulogized the Lord with words as venerable as those of the Vedas and enquired about the virtuous acts that bestow all auspiciousness.

29. Lord Rudra explained all those points of virtuous practices that the sage asked him about. Further, the sage asked:

Sanatkumāra said:

30. O holy Lord, all those virtuous practices that bring about salvation have been heard through your oral explanation. Through them men get relieved of all their sins and they will cross the ocean of worldly existence.

31. O Lord, now kindly tell any other virtuous practice necessitating very little effort but yielding a great benefit, to me. It must be a quick bestower of liberation on human beings.

32. Thousands of the virtuous and pious ritualistic practices as laid down in the scriptural texts involve a great deal of repeated performance. Even if scrupulously attended to, they may or may not accord final emancipation at the proper time.

33. Hence, with your favour, O great Lord, I wish to learn that Dharma which shall be the means of worldly pleasures as well as salvation and so beneficial to the world, though it may be a great secret.

Śrī Rudra said :

34. The application of *Tripuṇḍra* (three parallel lines marked with holy ash) is the most excellent of all pious practices unto all living beings. It is enjoined by the Vedas.

Sanatkumāra said:

35. O Lord, O ruler of the worlds, be pleased to explain the procedure of the application of Tripuṇḍra. O great Lord, I wish to know it with all basic principles with your favour.

36. How many places? What is the material? What is its power? Who is the deity? What is the proof? Who is the (actual) practitioner? What are the Mantras? What is their benefit?

37. O Lord of the worlds, with a desire for blessing the world, explain everything entirely regarding the characteristics of the application of Tripuṇḍra.

Śrī Rudra said:[1]

38. The Bhasma is called *Āgneya* ('resulting from fire') since it

1. VV 38-71 explain the procedure of applying *Bhasma* to mark Tripuṇḍra and its efficacy and the fruit accruing from it.

is (got from) burnt cowdung. That is the material, O great sage.

39. The Bhasma is to be taken up uttering the five Brahma-based Mantras "*sadyojāta*" etc. and then it should be consecrated with the Mantras beginning with "*agni*" etc.

40. It should be rubbed in and stroked uttering the Mantra "*mā nastoke*" etc. and the head should be smeared. The Bhasma (mixed) with water and charged with the Mantras should be applied to the forehead, the two arms and the shoulder uttering the Mantras "*tryaṁbakaṁ yajāmahe*", "*triyāyuṣam*" etc.

41. O eminent sage, on these places (i.e. parts of the body) three (parallel) lines are marked, beginning with the middle of the brows and ending with the extremities of the brows.

42. Two lines are to be drawn with the middle finger and the ring finger (from left end to the right end). In between those lines a line is to be drawn in the opposite direction (i.e. from right end to the left end) with the thumb. This is called Tripuṇḍra Rekhā.

43-44. For each of these three lines, there are nine deities. The deities of the first line are: (1) the letter "*A*", (2) Gārhaptya fire, (3) Ṛg Veda, (4) Bhūrloka (Earth), (5) Rajas Guṇa, (6) Ātman, (7) Kriyā Śakti (the power to do), (8) The morning ablution and (9) Mahādeva.

45-46a. The deities of the second line are: (1) the letter "*U*", (2) Dakṣiṇāgni, (3) Firmament, (4) Sattva Guṇa, (5) Yajurveda, (6) midday ablution, (7) Icchāśakti (will power), (8) the immanent soul and (9) Maheśvara.

46b-47. The deities of the third line are: (1) The letter "*M*", (2) Āhavanīya fire, (3) Supreme Soul, (4) Tamas Guṇa, (5) the heaven, (6) Jñāna Śakti (the power of Knowledge), (7) Sāmaveda, (8) the third ablution and (9) Śiva.

48-50. A wise devotee should apply Tripuṇḍra always after bowing down to these deities. This Māheśvara vow is glorified in all the Vedas. It should be resorted to (observed) by men desirous of salvation. He who practices Tripuṇḍra by (applying) Bhasma as per prescribed procedure will not have birth again. Whether a celibate student, a householder, a forest-dweller or a recluse, he who applies Tripuṇḍra in accordance with the injunctions becomes released from masses of major and major sins.

51. There is no doubt about this that he will be absolved of other sins too, such as slaughter of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, women and cows; similarly he is released from the sins of killing a warrior and the slaughter of a horse.

52. Even if one applies the Tripuṇḍra on the forehead without understanding its great efficacy or without reciting the Mantras, he gets relieved of all sins.

53-60a. There are different kinds of sins such as misappropriation of another man's wealth, defiling of another man's wife, censuring others, unauthorized occupation of another man's field, harassment of others, destruction of gardens and vegetation, arson, uttering lies, slandering, harshness, selling Vedas (for profit), perjury, breaking of vows and observances, deceit, serving mean fellows, acceptance of gifts from mean fellows, of cows, plots of lands, gold, buffaloes, gingelly seeds, shawls and blankets, clothes, cooked food grain, water etc., intimate physical (i.e. sexual) contact with slave girls, harlots, lecherous persons, Śūdra women, actresses, women in their menses, virgins and widows, sale of flesh, skins and hides, salt, juices (beverages) etc.— all these and numerous similar sins perish immediately by applying the Tripuṇḍra.

Misappropriation of Śiva's assets, censure of Śiva and rebuking of Śiva's devotees cannot be wiped off by means of expiatory rites.

He who wears Rudrākṣa (in any form) on his body and Tripuṇḍra on the forehead is worthy of adoration even if he be a Cāṇḍāla. He shall be the most excellent one among all castes.

60b-63. He who applies Tripuṇḍra on the forehead (has the merit of) bathing in every holy river or lake in this world such as the rivers Gaṅgā etc.

He who applies Tripuṇḍra on the forhead has the merit of one by whom seventy million great Mantras beginning with the five-syllabled one and crores of Śiva Mantras causing salvation have been recited.

He who applies Tripuṇḍraka redeems a thousand predecessors and a thousand yet to be born in his family.

64. In this world, he will enjoy all pleasures, a long life and freedom from illness and at the close of his life he will die peacefully.

65-69. He will then attain a splendid divine body possessing the eight valuable *Aiśvaryas* (such as *Aṇimā* etc.), will ride in a divine aerial chariot. He will be served by hundreds of celestial damsels. He will enjoy pleasures in different worlds in turns, in the regions of Vidyādharas, Siddhas, powerful and energetic Gandharvas, and the worlds of Indra and other Guardians of the world. He will enjoy in the cities of Prajāpatis and finally reach Brahmā's region where he rejoices for a hundred Kalpas. He will then sport about in the region of Viṣṇu for the duration of the life of three hundred Brahmās. Thereafter he attains

Śiva's world and enjoys himself there for endless years. He gets merged into Śiva. He is not born again.

70. After pondering over the essence of all the Upaniṣads repeatedly, this is the conclusion arrived at that Tripuṇḍraka is for the greatest of welfare.

71. This greatness of Tripuṇḍra has been briefly spoken by me. It is a great secret. It should be concealed from all living beings.

72. After saying this, holy Lord Rudra vanished there itself. Sage Sanatkumāra too went to the region of Brahmā.

73. Your intellect has become free from impurities due to contact with Bhasma. You also do apply the meritorious Tripuṇḍraka.

Sūta said:

74. After saying this, Vāmadeva, the Śivayogin of great penance consecrated some Bhasma and gave it to the terrible Brahmarākṣasa.

75. With that he applied a parallel Tripuṇḍraka on his forehead. Due to its majestic influence he immediately cast off the state of Brahmarākṣasa.

76. He shone with a brilliance like that of the Sun adorned by a halo of excessive refulgence. His form and features were divine. He shone remarkably with divine garlands and clothes.

77. Devoutly he circumambulated his preceptor, the Śivayogin. Seated in a divine aerial chariot he went to the meritorious worlds.

78. After granting him the greatest goal, Vāmadeva, the great Yogin wandered about in the world with his form concealed like Śiva himself.

79. One who hears the greatness of Bhasma in the form of Tripuṇḍra or narrates it or recites it, attains the great goal.

80. He who narrates the glory of Śiva, attains release from worldly existence; he who bows down to the lotus-like feet of Īśa worthy of being meditated upon by Śivayogins and he who applies the Tripuṇḍra shining with devotion to Śiva on the forehead, does not take up residence in the womb of any mother (i.e. attains Mokṣa).

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Efficacy of the Holy Ash (Concluded)

The sages said:

1-2. Indeed a speedy achievement of (spiritual) power is possible to men properly instructed by preceptors who are conversant with the principles of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and who are expounders of Brahman. But what type of achievement of power is possible to men who are instructed by preceptors more or less similar to the other men but great experts in ethics?

Sūta said:

3. Faith alone is highly beneficial in the case of all pious acts. It is only through faith that the achievement of power is possible by men in both the worlds.

4. If one worships with faith, even a stone yields good results. Even a fool adored devoutly becomes a preceptor bestowing great power.

5. A Mantra recited with faith may yield good results even if it be meaningless and absurd. A Deva faithfully adored, yields fruits even to a mean one.

6. If performed without faith, a worship, monetary gift, sacrifice, penance, vow, everything becomes futile like the (sprouting of) flower in a barren tree.

7. A man dogged by suspicions everywhere, a man devoid of faith, a man excessively unsteady, fails to attain the highest good. He is never released from worldly existence.

8. The result (of an action) conforms to one's own attitude towards Mantras, holy spots, Brāhmaṇas, Devas, astrologers, medicines and preceptor.

9. Therefore the universe is dominated by feelings or attitudes; merit and sin follow one's feelings. One devoid of feeling will never incur sin or merit.

10. In this connection a wonderful narrative is presented, whereby want of faith in all men is removed immediately.

11. The king of Pāñcāla had a son well-known as Siṁhaketu. He was endowed with all good qualities and he was always interested in the duties and obligations of a Kṣatriya.

12. Once that mighty prince went to a forest containing many

animals for the purpose of hunting . He had been accompanied by some servants too.

13. In the course of hunting his servant, a certain Śabara happened to see a dilapidated temple in ruins.

14. There he saw a fine, small, subtle Śivaliṅga fallen on the rough ground with the pedestal broken. The Liṅga appeared to be the embodiment of his luck.

15. Urged by his previous Karmas, he quickly collected it and showed it to the intelligent prince.

16-17. "O my lord, see this charming Liṅga found by me here. I shall worship it with respect in a manner befitting my financial capacity. Tell me the procedure for its worship, as Lord Maheśvara becomes (equally) pleased when adored by persons conversant or not conversant with Mantras."

18. On being asked thus by the Niṣāda, the prince who was an expert in playing jokes laughingly replied to him:

19-23. "One should always perform the rite of ablution with fresh water in accordance with the *Saṁkalpa* (a solemn vow to perform the worship). The (idol) should be placed in a pure seat and worshipped with fresh and auspicious sweet scents and raw rice grains, wild flowers and leaves, incense and lamps. At the outset ash from funeral pyre should be offered as present. A wise man should offer as Naivedya (food offering) cooked food usually partaken of by himself. He should offer once more incense, lights etc. Dances, instrumental music, songs etc. must be offered duly. After bowing down duly the wise devotee should make use of the *Prasāda* (gift or favour given in return). This is the common procedure of the adoration of Śiva spoken to you. Śaṅkara becomes immediately propitiated with the offerings of the ash from funeral pyre."

Sūta said:

24. Although he had been thus instructed by his master more jokingly (than seriously), that Śabara named Caṇḍaka received his words with (bowed) head.

25. He went back to his abode and worshipped Lord Maheśvara in the form of a Liṅga making daily offerings of ash from funeral pyre.

26. Whatever object was dear to him that as well as sweet scents, flowers, raw rice grains etc., he offered to Śaṁbhu first and then made use of it himself.

27. Thus he devoutly worshipped Maheśvara along with his wife.

The Śabara thus happily spent a few years.

28. Once the excellent Śabara began his adoration of Śiva but did not find any trace of the ash from funeral pyre, though he had filled the pot with it.

29. He quickly set off and wandered far and near all round searching for it. He could not get the ash from a funeral pyre. Utterly weary, he returned home.

30-32. Thereafter the Śabara called his wife and spoke these words: "I could not get the ash from the funeral pyre. What shall I do? O my beloved one, tell me.

As a result of my sin there has occurred a hindrance to my worship of Śiva today. I do not desire to live for even a moment without performing the worship.

I do not see any way out as the requisite thing for the worship is wanting. Nor should the instruction of the preceptor, which gives all objects of desire, be transgressed."

33-34. On seeing her husband bewildered and distressed, the Śabara woman replied: "Do not be afraid. I shall tell you the way out. I shall set fire to this abode that has grown for a long time and enter the fire. The ash from the funeral pyre can be obtained then."

Śabara said:

35. This body is the highest means to acquire Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa. Why do you abandon that body in its fresh youth that is intended for your happiness?

36. As yet you do not have even a child. You have not enjoyed worldly pleasures in full. How then do you wish to burn away this body worthy of all enjoyments?

Śabarī said:

37. The fulfilment of birth and life consists in that one should, of one's own accord, cast off one's own life for the sake of others or for Śiva's sake.

38. What austere penance has been performed by me formerly? What has been given as religious gift by me? What special worship of Śaṁbhu has been performed by me in the course of hundreds of my previous births?

39. What a (great) merit will accrue to my father and what a satisfaction will occur to my mother, if for the sake of Śiva I throw this body in the blazing fire!

* * *

40. On seeing her unflinching determination and devotion to Śaṅkara, the Śabara of firm resolve accepted it saying "so be it".

41. She approached her husband after taking bath and adorning herself and remaining pure in mind and body, she set fire to the house and circumambulated that fire devoutly.

42. After making obeisance to her preceptor and meditating on Śadāśiva in her heart, she faced the fire and sang thus with palms joined in reverence:

Śabarī said:

43. O Lord, let my sense-organs be flowers unto you; let this body be the Agallochum incense; the heart, the lamp; the vital breaths, the requisite *Havis* offerings; the organs of action, the raw rice grains unto you. Let this soul attain now the benefit of the adoration.

44. I do not wish for the possession of all the riches, nor the permanent heavenly world, nor the region of the Creator. If I am to be reborn, let me be in everyone of those births the humming bee hovering over the nectar sparkling in the lotus of your feet.

45. O Lord, let there be more than a hundred births of mine, but let not Māyā, the cause of ignorance, enter my mind. Not even for half a second should my heart move away from your lotus-like feet. Obeisance to you, O Lord.

46. After propitiating the Lord of Devas thus, the Śabarī of firm resolve, entered the blazing fire and was reduced to ash in a moment.

47. That Śabara scrupulously collected the ash and performed the worship of Śiva with great concentration very near the burnt house.

48. At the end of the worship he recollected the fact that everyday his beloved wife used to approach him with humility and palms joined in reverence in order to receive the *Prasāda.*

49. The moment she was remembered, he saw that she had already come and stood behind him with all her usual limbs. She shed pure smiles and was humble with devotion.

50-53. On seeing his wife standing with palms joined in reverence as before, and the house that had been reduced to ash standing firm as before, the Śabara was struck with wonder.

He thought: 'Fire burns with all its brilliance. The sun burns with the rays. King burns with punishment. Brāhmaṇa burns with his mind. Is this my dream? Or is it Māyā, a form of illusion?' He then

asked her: "You had been reduced to ash in the fire. How have you come back? How is it that the house that was burnt down is restored to its original form?"

Śabarī said:

54-56. When I set fire to the house and entered the fire, I ceased to know myself. Nor did I see the fire. I did not feel any heat around me as though I had entered water. It was as though I went to sleep for half a moment and woke up in a trice. Then I saw that the house had not been burned. It stands erect. Now that the worship is concluded, I have come to receive the *Prasāda.*

57. While the couple were thus talking to each other lovingly, a miraculous divine aerial chariot appeared before them.

58. Catching hold of the Niṣāda couple by their hands even as their bodies remained as before, four followers of Īśa went ahead and made them climb into that aerial chariot shining like a hundred moons.

59. When the hands of the messengers of Śiva touched it, the body of the Niṣāda and his wife assumed the same form as that of the messengers.

60. Hence there should be faith in all meritorious rites. Even the mean Śabara attained the goal of Yogins due to his faith.

61. Of what avail is a birth that may be the most excellent one of all castes? Of what use is the learning that discusses all scriptural texts? Which man is more blessed in all the three world than one in whose mind there is devotion to the great Lord?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Observance of the Vow of Umā-Maheśvara

Sūta said:

1. Now I shall explain the holy observance named Umāmaheśvara.[1] It is the bestower of all supernatural powers. It is the most excellent one among all excellent holy rites.

2-3. In the land of Ānarta, there was a certain Brāhmaṇa named

1. The chapter aims at describing the efficacy of Umā-Maheśvara-vrata. The Vrata proper is described in vv 26-64 and the fruit i.e. *Phalaśruti* of the Vrata in vv 65-67.

Vedaratha. He was a great scholar hailing from an excellent family. He had a wife and children. He continued his householder's life and later on a daughter of lotus-like eyes named Śāradā was born to him.

4. When she was aged twelve years, the girl had beauty of form and all good features. A Brāhmaṇa named Padmanābha whose wife had passed away, requested for the hand of the girl.

5. The Brāhmaṇa had plenty of wealth. He was calm and quiet. He was a permanent companion of the king. So the father of the girl did not dare to refuse. He gave the daughter to him.

6. The marriage was celebrated at midday. In the evening, the Brāhmaṇa went to the lake in the vicinity of his father-in-law's house to perform Sandhyā rites.

7. When it was very dark and while he was returning after performing the Sandhyā rites duly, in accordance with his previous Karmas, the Brāhmaṇa was bitten by a snake on the way.

8-9. When the newly married Brāhmaṇa died suddenly, the kinsmen bewailed and the parents-in-law became grief-stricken. After cremating him the kinsmen returned to their respective abodes. Śāradā after her widowhood stayed in her father's house.

10. Bereft of her husband and deprived of adequate food and clothing, the chaste girl spent some months in her father's house.

11. Once a certain very old, blind sage named Naidhruva came to that house holding the hands of his disciple.

12. When the old man came to the house, the kinsmen were away. That girl considered him her veritable god and went near him.

13. She said: "Welcome to you, O glorious one. Be pleased to sit on this pedestal. Obeisance to you, the lord of sages. What can I do to propitiate you?"

14. Saying this with very great devotion, she washed his feet and fanned him as he was weary. Thus she made the sage pleased.

15-16. She made the tired sage sit on a pedestal and massaged him with her own hands. When the sage had concluded his ablution and worship of the Lord, she worshipped him with the offerings of incense, garlands and unguents after he was comfortably seated. Then she respectfully fed him with excellent food.

17. He took his food well but slowly. He became satisfied. The delighted blind sage offered her his great blessings.

18. "Sport about with your husband. After getting a son through him endowed with all good qualities and great glory in the world, become one deserving the favour of deities."

19. On hearing these words uttered by that blind sage, the girl was struck with wonder. With palms joined in reverence she replied:

20-22. "O holy Brāhmaṇa, your words must be true. They cannot be false at all. But I am very unfortunate.

Like a heavy downpour falling on the top of a rock, like hospitality offered to a bitch, even the words of blessings of knowers of Brahman will be futile to my unfortunate self.

O Brāhmaṇa, I am a widow reaping the fruits of my own evil deeds. How can I deserve these words of blessings of yours?"

The sage said:

23. What has been now said by me, by a blind man without seeing you, I shall certainly accomplish. O splendid lady, carry out my instruction.

24. If you observe the holy vow of Umāmaheśvara you will immediately enjoy welfare by the power of that holy vow.

Śāradā said:

25. Even if it is very difficult to perform, I shall strenuously observe the vow as instructed by you. O holy Sir, explain that vow. Tell me its procedure in detail.

The sage said:

26. One should start the observance of the holy vow on an auspicious day in the bright half of Caitra (March-April) or Mārgaśīrṣa (November-December) duly with the permission of the preceptor.

27. After duly performing the *Saṁkalpa* on a full-moon day, new-moon day, eighth day or fourteenth day (of both fortnights) the devotee should perform the rite of early morning ablution.

28. After offering water libations to Pitṛs, Devas and others, the devotee goes back to his abode and erects a splendid pavilion adorned with canopies etc.

29. It must be decorated with fruits, sprouts, flowers etc. as well as festoons. In its middle, a mystic diagram of lotus design should be made by means of powders of five colours.

30-31. The external design should have fourteen petals. The design within it shall have twenty-two petals. The design further within should have sixteen petals and that within that should have eight petals. Thus the lotus design should be beautifully made in five colours. Then there should be a square and within it an excellent circle.

32. A heap of rice or other grains should be spread over it and a bundle of Kuśa grass kept thereon. A pot filled with water is to be placed on the bundle of Kuśa grass.

33. On the pot a coloured cloth is spread. Upon it there should be placed splendid idols of Śiva and Pārvatī made of gold. The devotee should adore them sincerely as elaborately as funds allow.

34. The idols are bathed first in Pañcāmṛta and then in pure water. The eleven Rudra Mantras shall be recited and then the five-syllabled Mantra (*namaḥ śivāya*) one hundred and eight times.

35. After consecrating (the idols) with Mantras and placing them in the middle of the pedestal, they should be worshipped. The wise devotee should be seated on a pure seat wearing washed white clothes.

36. The pedestal should be charged with Mantras. Then he should perform *Prāṇāyāma.* Before the deity he should remain with palms joined in reverence and then state the *Saṁkalpa* (as follows).

37-38. "I am beginning the worship of Śiva for the purpose of the destruction of whatever terrible sins have been committed by me in hundreds of my births. I shall perform the worship of Śiva for the enhancement of blessedness, success, good health, virtue and prosperity and for the attainment of the heavenly world and salvation."

39. After uttering the *Saṁkalpa* duly with concentration, the devotee performs the *Aṅganyāsa* (ritualistic touching of the limbs), and meditates upon Īśa and Pārvatī.

40-44a. (*Dhyāna or the form of Īśa for Meditation*) The Lord is as white as a jasmine flower and the moon. He is adorned with ornaments constituted of serpents. He poses his fingers in the gestures of granting boons and freedom from fear and holds in his hands axe and deer. He resembles ten million suns (in lustre). He is the cause of delight to the whole universe. He wears long and tawny-coloured matted hair due to coming into contact with the waters of Gaṅgā. He is embellished with a crown studded with jewels coming from the hoods of great serpents. His crown of matted hair shines with the crescent moon. He has armlets and other ornaments. His eye in the forehead is open. He has the sun and the moon as his other eyes. He is blue-necked and has four arms. He is clad in the hide of a lordly elephant. He is seated on a throne set with jewels. Serpents constitute his various ornaments.

44b-51. (*Dhyāna or the form of the Goddess for Meditation*) The goddess had divine garments and the lustre of ten thousand rising suns. She has the guise of a young girl with small and tender limbs. She has the crescent moon as her crest jewel. She has four hands holding a

noose and a goad and showing gestures of conferring boons and freedom from fear (with the other two hands). Aṁbā is pleasant-faced, sportive in spirit. She decorates herself with the blossoms of Kurabaka, Aśoka, Punnāga and fresh Caṁpaka. Fully blown jasmine flowers adorn her forelocks. Her big hips are adorned with a girdle of many strings. Her pair of feet is embellished with anklets having many tinkling bells. Her shining gemset ear-rings brighten her cheeks and surrounding areas. Her bud-like teeth shed lustrous rays upon her red lips. She is adorned with necklaces and garlands set with costly jewels. Her bangles, armlets and rings shine remarkably with rubies. She is clad in red garments. Her garlands and unguents are red. Her protruding plump breasts surpass lotus buds. Her side-glances are playfully glamorous. She is ever ready to bless her devotees.

52. After meditating on Śiva and Pārvatī, the parents of the world, in the lotus-like heart and after reciting the requisite Mantras he should begin the external worship.

53. After invoking the deities in the two idols, the devotee offers the seat etc. He should offer *Arghya* to both the deities by means of this Mantra after knowing fully the import of the Mantra:

54. "Obeisance to you, O Lord of Pārvatī, the most excellent one among the bestowers of boons in all the three worlds. O great Lord with three eyes, accept the *Arghya;* obeisance to you."

55. "Obeisance to you, O goddess of the chiefs of Devas, the remover of the fear of those who resort to you. O Mother, O bestower of boons, accept the *Arghya,* O goddess, O beloved of Śiva."

56. These two Mantras should be repeated thrice and the *Arghya* be offered with concentration. He should then offer sweet scents, flowers, raw rice grains, incense and lamps.

57. The food offering should be soaked in ghee along with milk pudding. He should perform the Homa of ghee a hundred and eight times repeating the *Mūlamantra.*

58. After taking away the food offering, he should offer incense, lights etc. Then a betel leaf should be offered. The devotee then makes obeisance with mental and physical purity.

59-60. Then a Brāhmaṇa couple should be fed after duly offering them the requisite services. After concluding the evening worship thus, the devotee takes food permitted by the Brāhmaṇa. He should take in only *Haviṣya* soaked in milk at night, remaining silent (while eating).

61. Thus the learned devotee should perform the holy vow in both the fortnights throughout the year. Then when the year is complete, the

Vratodyāpana rite (successful completion of Vrata) should be performed.

62-64. The *Śatarudra Mantra* should be recited when the idols are bathed in water. After worshipping Girijā and Śiva with the Mantra mentioned in the Āgama text, the pot along with the idols, cloth and gold should be given to the great Ācārya (preceptor) always engaged in good conduct. The devotee should devoutly feed the Brāhmaṇas after honouring them in accordance with his capacity. Cow, gold, garments etc. should be given as gifts to them. After being permitted by them, the devotee should take his food along with dear and near kinsmen.

65-67. He who devoutly performs the holy Vrata well-known in all the three worlds in this manner, shall be able to redeem twenty-one generations of his family. He shall enjoy all the pleasures as he desires. He shall certainly sport about in the regions of the Guardians of the worlds like Indra etc. Then he enjoys in the world of Brahmā and then in the eternal world of Viṣṇu. Then he attains Śiva's world and enjoys all pleasures there for a hundred Kalpas and attains Śiva ultimately.

68. This is the great Vrata mentioned by me. You should perform this with great faith. You will realize even the most difficult of all your desires.

69. On being instructed thus by the eminent sage, that girl was very much happy. With full faith, she accepted his sound and pleasing advice.

70. Then her parents and brothers returned. They saw the sage seated comfortably after taking food.

71. Promptly they prostrated before the noble-souled sage. Repeatedly requesting "Be pleased, be pleased", they adored him.

72. On hearing that the great sage had already been adored by the chaste lady and that he had blessed her after instructing the details of the Vrata, they were extremely delighted.

73-79. With palms joined in reverence, all of them said to the great sage: "All of us are blessed today by your arrival. The entire family has become sanctified. The household has become fruitful. This girl Śāradā had unfortunately become a widow due to unavoidable Karma. She has sought refuge in your lotus-like feet. Save her from the unbearable ocean of misery. You should kindly stay in our own house, in the adjoining apartment entirely suitable for ablution, adoration, Japa etc. This girl, O Brāhmaṇa, shall continue to adore you and perform the Vrata in your very presence, O great sage, till it is successfully con-

cluded. Stay with us till then and make our objectives fulfilled."

80. On being requested thus by all of her brothers and kinsmen, the excellent sage consented and stayed in the splendid apartment.

81. That chaste lady, devoid of impurities, worshipped Girijā and Śiva along the lines indicated by him (the sage) and performed the Vrata duly.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Story of Śāradā[1]

Sūta said:

1. Thus while she was performing the great Vrata in the presence of her preceptor, with her mind fully engrossed in the observances and restraints, a year elapsed.

2. At the end of the year the girl duly performed the *Udyāpana* rites (valedictory and concluding rites) in her father's abode, beginning with the feeding of Brāhmaṇas.

3-4. All the Brāhmaṇas were duly paid monetary gifts they deserved. After sending them off with due obeisance, she was congratulated by her parents. On that day she observed fast with all other observances. She recited the great Mantra imparted (to her) by the noble-souled one.

5-6. At dusk she duly worshipped Śaṅkara. The chaste lady was engaged in Japa and Arcanā in the presence of the preceptor in the apartment close to the house. She meditated on the great Lord. Then at night she sat ready for the nightlong vigil near Śiva.

7. At night the sage along with her propitiated Pārvatī by means of Japa, meditation and austerities.

8. Bhavānī was pleased with the devotion of her who had acquired purity by the observance of the Vrata as well as with the austerities and Yogic absorption of the sage. Then that sole Mother of the universe appeared before them but did not reveal her entire form.

9. When Gaurī who pervades the world appeared before them, even the blind sage regained sight of both the eyes.

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1. This chapter describes how the observance of Umā-Maheśvara-Vrata bore fruit. The husband of Śāradā's previous birth visited her in her dreams and she got a son even though the husband was in a distant land. As usual the motif of rebirth is used to explain incidents of the present birth.

10. On seeing the Mother of the worlds appearing and standing before them, the sage and the girl fell down at her feet.

11. The two revealed the purity of their heart by their devotional ardour. Tears of joy drenched all their limbs. Overwhelmed with compassion, she lifted them up and lovingly spoke to them:

The Goddess said:

12. O excellent sage, I am pleased with you. O dear girl devoid of sins, I am pleased with you. What desire of yours shall I grant you that may not be accessible even to the Devas?

The sage said:

13-14. This girl named Śāradā is a widow; while blind, I was propitiated (by her) and hence I had promised her thus: "You will be sporting about for a long time along with your husband. Attain an excellent son." Kindly make true what has been said by me. Obeisance to you.

The Holy Goddess said:

15. In her previous birth, this girl was the second wife of a Draviḍa Brāhmaṇa. She was well-known by the name Bhāminī.

16. She was endowed with sweet, tender beauty. She was always the beloved of her husband. She brought her husband under her control by means of her seductive charms as well as deceitful means.

17. With his heart attached to her, that Brāhmaṇa, due to infatuation for her, never approached the senior wife, though she was a chaste lady.

18. Being never approached by her husband, that lady had no son. She was always distressed with grief. After the lapse of some time, she passed away.

19. A certain Brāhmaṇa youth near her house became love-lorn on seeing the lady of beautiful limbs and caught hold of her hand.

20. With eyes turned (red like) copper on account of anger, the Brāhmaṇa was stopped by her. He courted death remembering her alone day and night.

21. After fascinating her husband she had made him averse to the senior wife. On account of that sin she became a widow in this birth.

22. Child-widowhood in the course of twenty-one births (is the sure fate) of those women who create estrangement between husband and wife.

23. Since in her previous birth she had performed a great worship of mine, that merit had destroyed the entire sin at that time itself.

24. The Brāhmaṇa who had become fascinated by his love to her and died of unbearable grief of separation, held her hand (for a short while) in this birth and passed away.

25. Her husband in the previous birth is now born in the Pāṇḍya kingdom as an excellent Brāhmaṇa with a wife and all kinsmen.

26. Let this girl be lovingly united with that husband night after night and obtain sexual love in dream, better than in waking state.

27. That Brāhmaṇa who is stationed in a place three hundred and sixty Yojanas (1 Yojana = 12 Kms.) away from this place, shall see this girl fascinating his mind in dreams and accord her adequate sexual pleasure.

28. Due to her nightly contact with her husband in dreams, she will in due course get a son destined to be a master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

29. That Brāhmaṇa too will always see in his dreams the son born out of (pure) love to her by the long contact with himself.

30. O great sage, I was propitiated by her in her previous birth. Hence I have appeared before her now to grant this boon.

Sūta said:

31. Then the great goddess spoke to the girl eagerly: "O dear girl of great fortune, listen to my final remark:

32-37. Whenever and wherever you happen to see your earlier husband, the one seen in dreams, you will be clever enough to recognize him. That Brāhmaṇa too will recognize you, the lady of good behaviour, by the features seen in the dream. Then both of you will talk over the matter. Then, O fair lady, hand over your learned son to him. Place in his hands the greatest fruit of this Vrata. Thereafter, O lady of excellent waistline, stay under his control. But let there be no physical contact between you two, apart from the dalliance in the course of dreams. In due course, when that excellent Brāhmaṇa passes away, you should enter his funeral pyre and attain my region. O lady of excellent eyebrows, your son will be the delighter of the minds of the entire public. He will have riches too. He will also attain the highest region."

Sūta said:

38. After saying this and granting her wish, the Mother of the three worlds quickly vanished even as both of them were watching.

39. After receiving the boon from Pārvatī, the storehouse of mercy, the girl derived great pleasure. She worshipped the preceptor.

40. When the night passed off, the sage who had regained his eyes and who was conversant with Dharma, secretly informed her parents about everything.

41. After taking leave of Śāradā, the glorious girl, and of all the others, offering them all blessings, the sage went away as he pleased.

42. As days passed on, the girl did have the contact with her husband in dreams, increasing her pleasure every moment.

43. Due to the boon bestowed by Gaurī, Śāradā, the performer of spotless holy vows, conceived as a result of the dream-dalliance with her husband.

44. On hearing that Śāradā had conceived even as she continued to be a widow, all of them said, "Fie upon you!" The people proclaimed her an adulteress.[1]

45. The kinsmen and the family friends of her dead husband got the news and hastened to her parent's house.

46. Then all the elderly persons of the village and the learned men came there and held an assembly including the old men of the family.

47. They summoned Śāradā, the pregnant girl. (As she sat) with face bowed down, they furiously threatened and rebuked her. Some of them turned their faces away from her.

48. "O adulteress, O evil-minded one, what have you done? You have brought about dishonour and infamy to our family in your childish waywardness."

49. After rebuking her thus, the learned old men of the village consulted together asking, "What shall we do?"

50-51. There some old men spoke to the girl mercilessly: "This girl of evil intentions has destroyed both the families. Her hairs should be closely shaved. Her ears and nose should be cut off. Let her be driven out of the family and banished from the village."

52. After thinking thus, they were about to do so. Thereupon, an ethereal voice was heard:

53-54. "No sin has been committed by this girl, nor has this family been disgraced. She has not broken any of her vows. This woman is decent in her behaviour. Henceforth, if any one dares to call her an adulteress, he deluded by his own fault will get his tongue split and torn in a trice."

1. VV 44-51 describe the social attitude to widow-mothers.

55. On hearing these unembodied words arising from the firmament, her mother, father and all the others became delighted.

56. Then all those elders of the villages and members of the assembly became bewildered. They sat silent for a short while, extremely frightened with heads hanging down.

57. Some among them were not credulous enough. They said that the ethereal voice was not genuine at all. Their tongues became split into two and they soon vomited worms.

58. Then the kinsmen and the relatives adored that girl. The elderly female and male relatives praised, "Excellent! Excellent!"

59. Some of the excellent ones among them shed tears of joy. The ladies of the family consoled themselves regarding her. They were happy (without any regret).

60. Then the others said, "The god does not utter any lie. But how did she conceive without swerving from the path of virtue and modesty?"

61. When some of the persons assembled there were seen doubting, an all-knowing old man well conversant with the truth about the world, said:

62. "This whole universe which is seen and heard is a product of Māyā. What is it that should happen or should not happen in this transient world?

63. An unprecedented and indescribable thing is clearly born of Māyā. The Māyā is under the control of Īśa. Who can know his activities?

64. The semen virile of the royal sage Yūpaketu fell into water. It is said that a harlot drank that water together with the semen and became pregnant.

65. After drinking the semen of Sage Vibhāṇḍaka together with water, a female deer became pregnant and gave birth to Ṛṣyaśṛṅga.

66. A female deer touched the hand of the king of Surāṣṭra, became pregnant instantly and gave birth to an ascetic.

67. Similarly, the woman Satyavatī was born of the womb of the glittering fish called Śapharī. The demon Mahiṣa was born of the womb of a buffalo.

68. Similarly there have been women who were made pregnant out of pity. For example a son was born of Rohiṇī through Vasudeva.

69. By the boons of deities or curses of great sages, even improper things become proper undoubtedly.

70. A pestle came out of the belly of Sāṁba by the curse of a

sage. By the power of the Mantras of the sages Yuvanāśva became pregnant.

71. Certainly this auspicious girl became pregnant, because she had been serving the sage's feet and had observed great Vratas of excessive efficacy.

72. In this connection, let the women secretly ask her and get at the real truth. Then the public will be free from suspicions."

73. Accordingly the women asked her secretly and she narrated the miraculous incident that happened to her in its entirety.

74. Comprehending everything, they accepted her as a chaste lady. Joyously praising her, they went to their respective abodes.

75. At an auspicious hour Śāradā of pure heart gave birth to a son having the lustre of the rising sun.

76. The lotus-eyed boy of beautiful features acquired great learning even in childhood and became highly intelligent.

77. He was invested with the sacred thread by the preceptor at the proper time. He earned the reputation of being a Śāradeya ('child of Śāradā' or 'one pertaining to Goddess Sarasvatī i.e. highly learned'). He delighted the minds of the people.

78. The intelligent boy easily learned Ṛgveda in his eighth year, all the Yajur Mantras in the ninth year, and Sāma Veda in the tenth year.

79-81. All the residents (of that village) went to Gokarṇa when the great festival of Śiva, devoutly celebrated in all the three worlds, approached. The chaste lady Śāradā too went to Gokarṇa along with her son. There she saw the husband of the previous birth coming (towards her) in the same form as was seen in the dreams. He was surrounded by his Brāhmaṇa relatives.

82. On seeing him, she became overwhelmed with love. Hairs stood on their ends all over the body. With great difficulty she could control the profuse shedding of tears. She stood there with her eyes fixed on him.

83-84. On seeing that woman recognized by beauty of form and other features, who had been enjoyed by him in dreams and who gave him much of sexual pleasure and also the boy born of his own body as seen in the dream, the Brāhmaṇa was struck with wonder and approached her.

85. "O fair lady, I wish to ask you something that is in my mind". After saying this he took her to a secret place.

86. "O lady of beautiful thighs, tell me who you are. O lady of excellent Vratas, whose wife are you? What is your native place? Whose daughter? What is your name?" He further asked.

87. On being asked by him, the woman with eyes brimming with tears, narrated everything concerning her, including her child-widowhood.

88. Then he asked that girl, "Whose excellent son is this? How was this boy as beautiful as the moon conceived in your womb?"

Śāradā said:

89. O my lord, this is my son. He is a master of all learnings. He is called Śāradeya after my own name.

90-91. On hearing her words the excellent Brāhmaṇa laughed and said: "O beautiful lady, your life story is extremely painful. Immediately after holding your hand, your husband was dead. How is this boy born? Let his source be disclosed."

92. On hearing these words uttered by him she became ashamed. Her face was covered with tears for a short while. Immediately she regained courage and spoke thus:

Śāradā said:

93. Enough of jocular utterances! O highly intelligent one, you know me. I too know you. In this matter, our mind is the ultimate authority.

94. After saying this and narrating the details of the boon granted by the Goddess, she gave him the boy, the partial fruit of her Vrata, who himself was in the habit of observing Vratas.

95. The delighted Brāhmaṇa accepted the boy and with the permission of his parents took her to his abode.

96. She stayed in that Brāhmaṇa's abode for many months. When he passed away she too jumped into the funeral pyre and followed him.

97. They rode on a divine chariot in the form of a couple. They enjoyed all divine pleasures and went to Śiva's place.

98. Thus the meritorious narrative has been recounted by me. To those who read this or hear this, it yields the benefit of worldly pleasures and salvation.

99. It increases longevity, health, riches and grain-stock. It makes women achieve auspicious conjugal bliss, progeny and happiness.

100. He who devoutly listens to or glorifies even once, this great narrative that lauds the merit of Gaurīmaheśa Vrata, that destroys mass of sins, enjoys all pleasures and then attains the eternal position.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Great Efficacy of Rudrākṣa : The Story of Mahānandā

Sūta said:

1. Now I shall describe the greatness of Rudrākṣa[1] succinctly. It is destructive of all sins of the listeners and readers.

2. One may or may not be a devotee, he may be a mean fellow, may be the meanest one (but), if he wears Rudrākṣas, he gets released from all sins.

3. The wearing of Rudrākṣa is meritorious. It has no equal. Sages, the seers of reality, call this (wearing) a great Vrata.

4. One who strictly adheres to Vratas and wears a thousand Rudrākṣas is on a par with Rudra. All the Suras bow down to him.

5-6. If a thousand (Rudrākṣas) are not possible, a devotee (can wear a couple of hundreds like this): sixteen on each of the arms, one on the tuft, twelve on each of the hands, thirty-two round the neck, forty on the forehead, six in each of the ears and one hundred and eight on the chest. He who wears Rudrākṣas thus is also worshipped like Rudra.

7. He who wears Rudrākṣas set with pearls, coral, crystal, silver, lapis lazuli or gold shall be Śiva himself.

8. Just as darkness does not touch the Sun so also sins do not touch him who wears the Rudrākṣas alone as and when he gets them.

9. A Mantra repeated with the use of a Rudrākṣa rosary gives endless fruits. A *Japa* without Rudrākṣa accords only meagre fruits.

10. If there is not a single Rudrākṣa, the bestower of many merits, on any one's limbs, and if he has no Tripuṇḍra, his birth is fruitless.

11. One who takes a head-bath with a Rudrākṣa tied to his head, shall undoubtedly get the merit of a holy bath in Gaṅgā.

12. If any one worships Rudrākṣa even without washing, he shall certainly obtain merit equal to that of adoration of the Liṅga.

13. These Rudrākṣas that are worshipped in the world (are of

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1 Rudrākṣa is the berry of *Elaeocarpus ganitrus* used for making rosaries. The berry is specially sacred to Rudra. The present chapter states how a monkey and a cock were born in royal families as they were made to wear Rudrākṣa.

VV 1-15 describe the sacred efficacy of Rudrākṣa.

various sorts). Some are single-faced, some five-faced, others eleven-faced and some fourteen-faced.

14. If devoutly worshipped daily, Rudrākṣa that can be identified with Śaṅkara makes even the poorest man endowed with the prosperity and glory of Rājarāja (Kubera).

15. Learned men recount a meritorious story in this context. It destroys all great sins on being listened to or recited.

16. Bhadrasena, a king of Kāśmīra land, was very famous. He had a heroic son of great intelligence named Sudharmā.

17. The virtuous son of the minister was a very nice friend of the prince. His name was Tāraka.

18. Those two boys of very handsome features were very friendly to each other. They were engaged in learning the different arts and sciences from childhood. They also played together.

19. They used to embellish their limbs with Rudrākṣas. Smearing themselves with *Bhasma* (holy ash), they moved about with the limbs nicely developed.

20. Discarding jewels and gold ornaments like necklace, armlets, bracelets, ear-rings etc., they wore Rudrākṣas.

21. They always wore strings of Rudrākṣa beads as their necklace and Rudrākṣa bracelets on their wrists. They considered Rudrākṣas as a good ornament for the neck and they had Rudrākṣas in their ear-rings.

22. They looked upon ornaments of gold and jewels like a lump of earth and stone. Though the people dissuaded them, they did not stop wearing Rudrākṣas.

23. Once, by chance, the excellent sage Parāśara who was like God Brahmā himself, happened to come to the abode of the king of Kāśmīra.

24. When the great sage capable of knowing the three divisions of time (past, present and future) was comfortably seated, the king, the most excellent one among men of piety, duly honoured him and asked:

The king said:

25-27. O holy Sir, my son here and the son of my minister always wear Rudrākṣas. They don't like jewel-set ornaments. Though bidden by me always to make use of jewel-set ornaments, they continue to ignore my words and show their preference for Rudrākṣas. These two boys have never been advised by anyone (in this re-

gard). How did the boys happen to have this natural tendency?

Parāśara said:

28. Listen, O king, I shall narrate the previous life story of your intelligent son, as well as that of the son of the minister. It will give you some surprise.

29. Formerly there was a well-known harlot in Nandigrāma village, named Mahānandā.[1] She had charming features conducive to lust.

30-36. The harlot was extremely rich. (She used to display) an umbrella white like the full moon, a vehicle shining with gold, chowries with splendid handles and golden sandals. The garments were of various colours, very valuable and extremely brilliant. The beds vied with the rays of the moon and the cots and palanquins were golden. She had hundreds of cows and buffaloes, and slaves too in hundreds. The slave girls were in the prime of their youth with their limbs brightly illuminated with all sorts of ornaments. The ornaments were of very great value with all the nine gems shedding their brilliance. Sweet scents, saffron, musk, camphor and agallochum made the unguents remarkable. Garlands of diverse colours embellished them. They had nice good food. The abode had variegated canopies and abounded in the stock of grains. (She had) thousands of gems and wealth to be reckoned in crores. The harlot possessed all these rich assets and sported about as she pleased. Yet she was extremely devoted to truth and piety. She was always engaged in the adoration of Śiva.

37. She was always interested in Śiva legends, eager to hear names of Śiva and discourses on Śiva. She used to bow down at the feet of Śiva's devotees. She was always engrossed in the devotion to Śiva.

38-39. That harlot had a monkey and a cock to humour herself. She used to embellish them with Rudrākṣas and make them dance in the middle of the dance-pavilion inducing them with the clappings of her hands and songs (sung sweetly). Surrounded by her female companions, she used to laugh loudly (viewing these).

40. With adequate training given by her, the monkey which

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1. The story of a truthful harlot Mahānandā is very popular. It is introduced here both for the glorification of Rudrākṣa and as a motif of rebirth to explain the behaviour of the prince in the present birth.

had Rudrākṣas for armlets, ear-rings and other ornaments could dance like a boy.

41. The cock had Rudrākṣas tied to its crest and it danced along with the monkey like a well-trained dancer, delighting everyone who watched.

42. Once a certain Vaiśya who used to observe the holy vows of Śiva, came to her house. He had the Tripuṇḍra (on the forehead) and Rudrākṣas (round the neck etc.). He (seemed to be) a contented man, free from the sense of possessiveness.

43. On his spotless wrist he had worn an excellent bracelet set with a great jewel. It was blazing like the midday sun.

44. On his arrival, the harlot honoured him with great delight. Looking at the bracelet on his wrist, she spoke with a sense of wonder:

45. "This bracelet on your wrist has been set with great jewels, O good man; it captivates my mind. It really deserves to be an ornament of a celestial damsel."

46. On seeing her enamoured of the bracelet set with excellent jewels the liberal-minded Vaiśya spoke with a smile:

The Vaiśya said:

47. If your mind has any ardent wish (to have) this excellent jewel of divine features, you take this and be glad. Well, what will you give me by way of its price?

(Mahānandā said:)

48-49. "We are self-willed harlots and not chaste ladies; promiscuous sexual activity is a duty befitting our families. If you give me this gemset bangle, I shall be your wife for three days and nights."

The Vaiśya said:

50. So be it, if you are bound by your words, O wanton lady, I shall give you the gemset bracelet; be my wife for three nights.

51. In this transaction, the moon and the sun are the witnesses. Say "True" three times and touch my heart, O my beloved.

The harlot said:

52. O my lord, I shall become your wife for three days and

nights and shall pursue my duties and obligations in your company.

53. Saying this she touched his heart. The Vaiśya gave her the gem-set bracelet. Handing over a Liṅga full of jewels, he spoke thus:

54. "O my beloved, this Śiva Liṅga, full of jewels, is like my own vital breaths. It should be preserved. Its loss is the loss of my life."

55. Saying "It shall be so", that woman took the jewel-set Liṅga and placed it on a pillar in the dance pavilion. Then she went into her house.

56. In intimate contact with that Vaiśya who behaved like a sensualist, she slept gladly on the palanquin rendered splendid by a soft bed.

57. Then at midnight, the dance pavilion caught fire all of a sudden, which enveloped everything.

58. When the pavilion began to burn, the harlot got up with great bewilderment and set the monkey free.

59. When set free along with the cock, the monkey ran off with great fright scattering sparks of fire.

60. Seeing that the Liṅga too was completely burnt and reduced to pieces, the harlot and the Vaiśya suffered from unlimited misery.

61. On seeing the Liṅga which he valued like his own life, burnt completely, the eminent Vaiśya became dejected and despondent. He set his heart on suicide.

62-64. Due to acute grief leading to indifference to worldly matters, the Vaiśya spoke to her who was also miserable: "Now that the Śivaliṅga is reduced to pieces, I do not want to live." Get a funeral pyre made for me, O gentle lady, by your powerful servants. I shall enter fire with my mind resting in Śiva. Even if Brahmā, Indra, Viṣṇu and others were to prevent me collectively, I will refuse to be discouraged in entering the fire and give up my life."

65. Realizing how determined he was, she became extremely miserable. Just at the outskirts of the city she got a funeral pyre ready through her servants.

66. Thereafter the Vaiśya sanctified by devotion to Śiva circumambulated the fire and entered it patiently even as people stood watching. The young woman sympathized with him.

67. Then that miserable woman recollected her sacred obligation. Facing all her relatives she spoke these moving words:

68-71. "Accepting the gemset bracelet, a promise was made by me that I shall be the committed wife of this Vaiśya for three days. It was on account of my negligent act (that) this Vaiśya died. Hence I shall enter the fire along with him. What has been promised by me that 'I will be fulfilling my wifely duties to him', you can see as true.

The Devas, the lords of the three worlds become pleased with truth. Devotion to truth is the greatest duty. Everything is well-established in truth. Heavenly pleasures and salvation can be obtained through truth. Greatest goal cannot be reached through untruth. Hence, relying on truth, I shall enter the fire."

72. Firm in her resolve though dissuaded by her relatives, the woman set her heart on abandoning her life, as she was afraid that she would deviate from *Satya* (truth).

73. She made a gift of all her possessions to the devotees of Śiva. While meditating on Sadāśiva, she circumambulating the fire three times stood ready to enter the fire.

74. Śiva, the immanent soul of the universe, manifested himself and prevented that woman who had dedicated her mind at his own feet, from falling into the blazing fire.

75. On seeing the Three-eyed Lord of all the Devas who had the digit of the moon for an ornament and who had the lustre of ten millions of moons and suns and fires, she stood as if stunned and frightened.

76. Consoling that agitated trembling lady who was benumbed and who shed tears, the Lord took her by the hand and said:

Śiva said:

77. It was I who became a Vaiśya and came to you in order to test and see for myself your steadfastness to truth, piety, courage and unwavering devotion to me.

78. I created fire through my Māyā and burnt down the dance-pavilion. After making the gemset Liṅga burnt down, I entered the fire myself.

79. Harlots are usually deceitful, adulterous and hoodwinkers of the common people. But you (on the contrary) entered the fire along with me on recollecting your promises.

80. Hence I will give you all types of enjoyment of pleasures

rare even unto gods, longevity, health and increase of progeny. O lady of big hips, whatever you wish I shall give that unto you.

Sūta said:

81-84. When the Lord of Gaurī said thus, she replied:

The harlot said:

I have no desire for any of the pleasures on the earth, in heaven or in nether worlds. I do not seek or woo anything else, except (the opportunity to) touch your lotus-like feet.

All these servants, slave girls and all of my relatives are engrossed in worshipping you. They have dedicated their actions to you.

Along with me, take all these to your greatest region. Take away the terrible fear of taking another birth. Obeisance to you.

85. Saying "So (be it)", Maheśvara approved of her words. He took all of them, along with her to his greatest region.

Parāśara said:

86. While the dance pavilion was on fire, the cock and the monkey survived because they had run away.

87. Her dancing pet, the monkey, passed away in due course and was born as your prince and the minister's son was the cock in the previous birth.

88. Due to the merit of wearing the Rudrākṣas which they earned in the previous birth, they are born in a noble family as these boys.

89-90. Due to their previous practice, they are even now wearing the Rudrākṣas. They have preserved the purity of their minds. They will worship Śiva in this birth and ultimately go to him.

Such is the tendency of these two boys as I have narrated. The story of the lady devotee of Śiva was also recounted. What else do you wish to ask?

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Greatness of Rudrādhyāya

Sūta said:

1. On hearing these nectar-like words uttered by the Brāhmaṇa-sage, the king became happy. With palms joined in reverence, he spoke again:

The king said:

2. How wonderful it is! The association with saintly people is destructive of all sins. It eradicates sexual urge and anger. It can yield whatever is desirable.

3. My ignorance born of Māyā has perished. The vision of knowledge has been brightened. Merely by seeing you I have become almost an excellent immortal.

4. The story of the previous life of these two boys has been heard completely. O sage, I shall ask you about the future too of my son.

5. How many years will he live? Of what nature is his fortune? Learning, reputation, power, faith and devotion—what will be the position of these?

6. O sage, it behoves you to narrate all these fully. I am your disciple, servant and a seeker of refuge in you

Parāśara said:

7. In this regard there is something that cannot be spoken. How will I be able to speak out? On hearing that, even men of great courage may become distressed.

8. Still, as you ask sincerely without any fraudulent intention, O king, I am urged by the love unto you to speak out even those things which should not be disclosed ordinarily.

9. This your prince has passed his twelfth year. Seven days hence he will die.

10. On hearing these words of his which were like the Kālakūṭa poison, the king suddenly lost consciousness and fell on the ground with excessive grief.

11. The sage with his mind melting with pity lifted him up

and consoled him. He then said: "O king, do not be afraid. I shall speak what is beneficial to you.

12. Prior to creation there was darkness everywhere, but the single, supreme, pure (unsullied) Being, the refulgence of knowledge and bliss persisted. That is the primordial Śiva himself.

13. He alone at the outset created Brahmā of Rājasika form. He gave the Vedas to him who was employed in the job of creation.

14. Further the Lord gave him the *Rudrādhyāya* which is the sole compendium of all the principles of Ātman and the essence of all the Upaniṣads.

15. The single immutable refulgence of the Absolute, the eternal truth of the nature of Śiva, is established in Rudrādhyāya.

16. The illustrious Self-born Brahmā, in the course of his creation of the universe, breathed out the four Vedas through his four mouths for the sake of the sustenance of the worlds.

17. Out of them, amongst the Yajur Mantras, Rudrādhyāya, the sum and substance of all the Upaniṣads, came out of his right (southern) mouth.

18. The same was received and retained by all the sages including Marīci and Atri, along with the Devas. From them their disciples got it.

19. It was duly handed over through the disciples of those disciples, to their sons and their sons' sons. This essence of the Vedas, i.e. Rudrādhyāya, was received and retained and propitiated.

20. This is the greatest Mantra, the greatest austerity. The *Japa* (repetition) of Rudrādhyāya is the greatest means of attaining salvation unto all men.

21. Those who are said to have committed major sins as well as those who perpetrate minor sins, attain the great goal through the *Japa* of Rudrādhyāya.

22. Beings with a mixture of *Sat* (good) and *Asat* (evil) were further created by Brahmā, viz. Devas, brutes, human beings etc. The universe got filled with them.

23. Their activities (and obligations) were created (were laid down) befitting their own nativity (and natural propensities). The people work thereat and experience their results.

24. At the outset, for the continuity of the creation, Prajāpati (Brahmā, the creator) wrought Dharma (piety) and Adharma (im-

piety) out of his chest and back respectively.

25. Those who pursue only Dharma derive merit as the fruit thereof. Those who resort to Adharma reap the fruits of sin.

26. Heavenly pleasure is the fruit of pious activities and hellish experience that of the opposite. The rulers of heaven and hell are Indra and Yama, and they are created by Brahmā.

27. Lust, anger, greed, pride, jealousy etc. are the sons of Adharma. They lead to Naraka.

28. Defiling preceptor's bed, imbibing liquor, carnal approach to Pulkasī (a tribal woman)—these are the chief sons of *Kāma* (Lust).

29. *Pitṛvadha* (Patricide) was born of *Krodha* (anger) and also *Mātṛvadha* (Matricide). There is one daughter named *Brahmahatyā* (Brāhmaṇa-slaughter). These are the children of *Krodha* (Anger).

30. *Devasvaharaṇa* (Misappropriation of temple property), *Brahmasvaharaṇa* (Misappropriation of the assets of Brāhmaṇas) and *Svarṇasteya* (Stealing of gold)—these are known as the sons of *Lobha* (Covetousness).

31. Yama summoned all these Cāṇḍālas, the leaders of sins and ruled over Naraka in order to make it flourish.

32-34. There are nine such leaders of sins. Commanded by Yama, all these terrible leaders of sins assembled together and protected the Narakas (Hells) assisted by their servants, the *Upapātakas* (Minor Sins). After the advent of Rudrādhyāya on the earth as the sole and direct means of attaining salvation (*Mokṣa*), all these leaders of sins became frightened and fled. Approaching Yama along with the Minor Sins, they prayed to Yama:

35-40. 'O great king, be victorious. Indeed we are your servants. For the prosperity of Narakas we have been appointed officials with rights and obligations. O lord, we are helpless and incapable of staying in the world now. By the majestic power of Rudrādhyāya, we are scorched and driven away.

How can we move about in the world when the recitation of Rudrādhyāya is sufficiently widespread in every village, on the banks of the rivers and sacred spots and shrines?

We do not at all mind a thousand expiatory rites, but we are unable to bear the very syllables of *Rudrādhyāya*.

We, the chiefs among Major Sins, the destroyers of the worlds, are greatly frightened by Rudrādhyāya. It is a great poison unto us.

Thus a terribly unbearable disaster has befallen us on account of Rudrādhyāya. It behoves you to ward it off.'

41. Thus directly appealed by the leaders of sins, Yama went to Brahmā and submitted to him everything:

42-45. 'O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the universe, I seek refuge in you. I have been employed by you for the task of restraining men who perpetrate sins. Now there are no sinners among men all over the world. The entire horde of sins has been wiped off by Rudrādhyāya. Since the masses of sins have perished, the Narakas have become empty. In the event of the voidness of Narakas, my rule has become futile. Hence, O holy Sir, let the means be thought over by you alone, lest I should lose the mastery over embodied human beings.'

46. Thus informed by Yama who was extremely distressed, the Creator evolved means of preventing the popularity of *Rudrajapa*.

47. He let loose among human beings the two daughters of *Avidyā* (Ignorance), viz. *Aśraddhā* (Lack of faith) and *Durmedhā* (Silliness) intended to be the opponents of *Śraddhā* (Faith) and *Medhā* (Intellect).

48. Deluded by those two, the world became indifferent towards Rudrādhyāya. So Yama came back to his post apparently contented.

49. Due to the sins committed in previous births, people become short-lived. Those sins perish in the case of men who perform *Rudrajapa*.

50. When all the sins subside, longevity, strength, fortitude, health, wisdom and prosperity of all embodied beings get increased.

51. Persons who after bathing Lord Maheśvara by means of Rudrādhyāya make use of that water for their own ablution, surmount the eventuality of death.

52. No fear of death shall torment those people who bathe in waters sanctified with the Mantras of Rudrādhyāya. They are honoured in the world of Śiva.

53. Through Śatarudrābhiṣeka a man becomes capable of living up to the age of a hundred years. Getting himself freed of all sins, he shall become a favourite of Śiva.

54. Let this son of yours take the ablution after ten thousand Japas of Rudrādhyāya. He will live joyously on the earth like Indra for ten thousand years.

55. He will possess unobstructed strength and unmitigated prospe-

rity. All his enemies will be killed. He shall be free from ailments. Shaking off the entire range of sins, he will rule the kingdom free from vexation.

56-57. Brāhmaṇas of very high order, fully conversant with the Vedas, quiet and confident of what they can do, of praiseworthy holy observances, established in the practice of Yajña, austerities and pursuit of knowledge and considering devotion to Śiva as their sole goal, must perform the Japa of *Rudrādhyāya* with purity of mind. By the power of their Japa welfare will immediately result."

58. As the great sage said thus, the king chose him alone as the first preceptor for the requisite rite. Very soon he invited thousands of other sages devoid of greed for wealth.

59-60. Those Brāhmaṇas of quiescent minds numbering thousands placed a hundred pots filled with the exudation of holy trees. After duly bathing the prince with the Rudrādhyāya (charged holy water), they bathed him (with the exudations) on the seventh day.

61. Being bathed by the sages, that prince appeared to be frightened suddenly and fell into a swoon.

62-64. He regained consciousness suddenly and was afforded protection by sages. He spoke: "A certain man of a very huge body came to hit me with a big stick in his hand. He was excessively terrifying, but he was beaten by other heroic persons. He was bound with a big rope and it appeared as though he was taken very far away. I saw only this much and I have been saved by you all."

65. When the prince spoke thus, the excellent Brāhmaṇas blessed him and intimated to the king how he was frightened.

66-67. The excellent king honoured all the excellent sages with monetary gifts and devoutly fed them with excellent cooked food. He then received the blessings of those sages, the expounders of Vedas. Thereafter, he came to the assembly and sat there along with his kinsmen with great devotion.

68. When the heroic king came along with the sages, the celestial sage Nārada, the great Yogin himself, came there.

69. On seeing the preceptor of all sages stepping in, the king devoutly bowed to him along with all the eminent sages assembled there. He made him seated on a pedestal offering all requisite services. Then the king spoke:

The king said:

70. O holy Sir, is there anything miraculous seen by you any-

where in the three worlds? Recount that to us. All of us are eager to imbibe the nectar of your speech.

Nārada said:

71. O great king, a very wonderful thing was seen by me today as I was coming down from the sky. Listen to it along with these eminent sages.

72. Mṛtyu (god of Death) who is unassailable and who always harasses the entire world had, with a staff in his hand, come today to kill your son.

73-74. Īśvara came to know that he had come to kill your son. He directed Vīrabhadra, one of his attendants, along with his assistants (towards him). He came and firmly bound Mṛtyu who had come to kill your son and angrily beat him with a stick.

75. On coming to know that he was being taken to the presence of the Lord of the universe, Lord Yama shouted words of victory to Lord Śiva with palms joined in reverence. Bowing down his head, he spoke to the Trident-bearing Lord.

Yama said:

76. O Lord of Devas, O Mahā Rudra, O Vīrabhadra, obeisance to you. How is it that you have become angry with Mṛtyu who has not committed any offence?

77. Mṛtyu was about to strike the prince whose life span had come to an end in accordance with his Karmas. O Lord, tell me, is this an offence?

Vīrabhadra said:

78. The ablution of Rudra has eradicated everything inauspicious in regard to the prince. He is now endowed with a life span of ten thousand years. What calamity can endanger his life?

79. If you have any doubt in regard to my irrefutable statement, call Citragupta presently. Let him be asked without any delay.

Nārada said:

80. On being summoned by Yama, Citragupta came there promptly. On being asked about the span of your son's life he said:

81. First he said "twelve years", but after reflecting and checking the records, he admitted that the boy had ten thousand years more to live.

82. Thereafter, the frightened King Yama bowed down to Vīrabhadra and somehow got Mṛtyu released from his captivity that could not have been warded off (otherwise).

83. Released by Vīrabhadra, Yama went back to his palace, Vīrabhadra to Kailāsa and I have come to your presence.

84. Hence this prince of yours has surmounted the danger of death due to Rudrajapa. He shall be happy for ten thousand years.

85. After saying this, Nārada went to heaven. The delighted Brāhmaṇas went to their respective hermitages.

86. Thus the king of Kāśmīra surmounted all miseries due to the power of Rudrādhyāya and became happy along with his son.

87. Those men who glorify this greatness of Parameśvara and imbibe it through their ears, will be rid of the numerous sins committed in the course of crores of births. They will become peaceful and attain the highest place of the Moon-crested Lord.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Efficacy of Listening to the Purāṇa

Sūta said:

1. Thus the most auspicious and beneficial path has been shown clearly by Śiva himself. It is the most efficient means of bringing about the immediate liberation of men shackled to the world.[1]

2-3. Further, this is the common path for the direct achievement of emancipation (*Mokṣa*) for dull-witted men, those unauthorised for the study of the Vedas, for women, for all embodied ones belonging to the twice-born classes. It deserves to be resorted to by great sages and it is honoured even by Devas.

4. Listening to the stories of Śaṁbhu is destructive of the danger of worldly existence. It affords us immediate liberation, it is praiseworthy and sacred for all embodied beings.

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1. VV 1-48 describe the efficacy of listening to this Purāṇa.

5. Unto those blinded by the darkness of ignorance, this is a lamp affording the acquisition of knowledge. It is the greatest medicine for those affected with the ailment of worldly existence.

6. To mountains of great sins, it is a terrible blow like that of thunderbolt to mountains; it roasts up the seeds of Karmas and brings about all riches and prosperity.

7. Those men who always listen to Śaṁbhu's stories that sanctify all the worlds, are certainly Rudras in the world.

8. Sages have extolled the dust particles sticking to the feet of those men who listen to the stories of the Trident-bearing Lord and who glorify them as themselves holy places and shrines.

9. Hence, let those embodied beings who wish for the achievement of salvation, always devoutly listen to the ancient (Purāṇic) stories of Śiva.

10. If any man is unable to listen to the Purāṇa-stories always, let him listen to it at least for a short while everyday.

11. If the man is unable to listen to it everyday, let him listen to it on any auspicious day, or meritorious *Tithis* or in sacred months.

12. He who listens to the fascinating narratives occurring in the Purāṇas crosses the (ocean of) worldly existence after burning down the great forest of Karmas.

13. If people listen to the sacred story for a Muhūrta or for half that time, nay even for a moment with devotion, they will never face misfortune or hell.

14. A man obtains by listening to the Purāṇas once that benefit which accrues from all the Yajñas or all the religious gifts.

15. Particularly in Kali age, apart from listening to the Purāṇas, there is no greater pious practice for men nor a better path of redemption.

16. There is no better way of glorification of Śaṁbhu than listening to the Purāṇas. Hence it yields to men great benefits like the celestial wish-yielding tree.

17-18. 'Men in Kali age are short-lived, weak and oppressed by fatigue. They are dull-witted and miserable. They are devoid of pious practices.' Thinking thus, the holy sage Bādarāyaṇa was moved with pity. For the sake of the welfare of those men, he prepared the nectarine juice in the form of Purāṇas.

19. If one succeeds in drinking ambrosia, he alone becomes

immortal and free from old age. But the ambrosia of the story of Śaṁbhu will render the entire family immortal and free from old age.

20. A person conversant with the Purāṇas, whether he be a boy, a youth, an old man or a weak-bodied poor fellow, should always be saluted and adored by people who seek merit.

21. No one should demean or speak ill of a person conversant with the Purāṇas, the words from whose lotus-like mouth are like Kāmadhenu ('wish-yielding cow') unto all embodied beings.

22. There are *Gurus* (elders, preceptors, venerable ones) in all the worlds, by birth or by the qualities they possess. Among all of them, a person conversant with the Purāṇas is the greatest *Guru*.

23. Man feels exhausted and depressed by frequent births in the course of crores and thousands of transmigrations. That being the case, who else can be a better Guru than the one who accords us the benefit of no return (to Saṁsāra).

24. A man conversant with the Purāṇas shall be pure and quiescent. He shall have control over his passions. He shall be free from feelings of jealousy etc. He shall be well-behaved and sympathetic. He shall be eloquent and shall sensibly recount the meritorious story.

25. When a Brāhmaṇa expounding the Purāṇas has occupied the Vyāsa-seat, he shall not bow down to anyone till the stipulated portion of the story is not completed.

26. He should not expound the story before men of crooked behaviour, who are rogues, wicked or men of competitive spirit desirous of defeating others in argument.

27. A wise expounder should not narrate the holy story in a place abounding in wicked men, or in a land infested by beasts of prey, or in a region where gambling is popular.

28. A learned expounder should narrate the holy story in a good village abounding in good people, in a holy place, in a temple, on the holy banks of rivers etc.

29. Listeners endowed with devotion to Śiva, who are not interested in other activities, who control their speech, who have good auditory power and who are never perturbed shall earn merit.

30. Those base men who listen to the holy story without devotion, shall not derive meritorious benefits. In every birth they will be miserable.

31. Those who listen devoutly to a Purāṇa without first adoring it with betel leaves and other offerings, may become poor,

though they are not sinners.

32. If men go elsewhere in the middle when the story is in progress, their wives and riches die or perish in the middle of the enjoyment of pleasures.

33. Those base men who listen to the holy story with turbans on their heads are reborn as cranes. They are sinful persons.

34. Those who listen to the holy story while chewing betel leaves will be compelled to swallow their own excreta by the servants of Yama in Naraka.

35. Those haughty persons who listen to the story while occupying a very high seat, will experience endless miseries in hell and ultimately be born as crows.

36. Those who occupy couches or sit in the posture of Vīrāsana (sitting on hams) while listening to the holy story, will become trees of crooked growth.

37. Men who do not bow down before beginning to listen to the holy story, become poisonous trees. Men who lie down and listen to the story will be born as pythons.

38. He who listens to the story while occupying a seat on a level with that of the expounder (of the Purāṇa) incurs a sin on a par with that of defiling the preceptor's bed and falls into hell.

39. Men who censure a man conversant with the Purāṇas or the story that dispels sins, become dogs in a hundred births.

40. The base men who talk and interrupt while the (Purāṇa) story is progressing, will be born as donkeys first and then as chameleons.

41. Those men who never listen to the holy story will fall into terrible hells and later be born as wild pigs.

42. Those excellent men who encourage and praise the holy story, though they might not have listened to it, attain the everlasting highest region.

43. Those rogues who create obstacles while the story is in progress will rot in hells for ten million years and then become domestic pigs.

44. Those who narrate to men the holy Purāṇa story will occupy the region of Brahmā for hundreds of crores of Kalpas and even more.

45-46. Those men who offer blankets, deer skins or cloths, planks or couches to men conversant with the Purāṇas to be comfortably seated, will attain heavenly worlds and enjoy pleasures

as they desire. Thereafter they attain untainted (pure) positions in the worlds of Brahmā and others.

47. Those who give to a man conversant with the Purāṇas new cotton clothes, become endowed with knowledge after enjoying all pleasures.

48. Those who are (even) guilty of major sins and those who perpetrate minor sins attain the greatest region by listening to the Purāṇas.

49. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, in this context I shall narrate a highly meritorious old legend, wonderful and charming, and also one that destroys all the sins of those who listen to it.[1]

50. There is a village named Bāṣkala somewhere in the Dakṣiṇāpatha (South). All the men there are stupid and devoid of holy rites.

51. Pious Brāhmaṇical practices are not current there. People are indifferent to Śruti and Smṛtis. They never perform Japas or study the Vedas. They are ever after other men's wives and sensual pleasures.

52. Some are farmers; some wield weapons; but all are irreligious and of crooked behaviour. They do not know the greatest virtue characterised by knowledge and absence of attachment.

53. Women too indulge in vice and sins. They were adulteresses and lascivious. Evil-minded and crooked as they were, they shunned holy vows and pious practices.

54. There lived a base Brāhmaṇa named Vidura, vile in temperament. Though he had a wife, he became enamoured of a harlot. He always followed evil paths.

55. He used to leave his wife named Bandulā alone and go to the harlot's house every night where afflicted with lust he used to sport about.

56. His wife in her prime of youth left alone at night, could not bear the onslaught of passion. She too contacted a paramour and sported about.

57. Seeing her in a compromising position with a paramour once, the husband angrily rushed at her.

58. The paramour fled. The wicked man seized the wife and hit her with his fist again and again.

59-60. Oppressed by her husband, the angry woman retorted

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1. VV 49-130 narrate how a sinful woman attained a place in Śiva's abode by listening to the Purāṇa and how she redeemed her husband who had become a Piśāca for his sins by making him listen to Śiva's glory.

fearlessly. "You dally with a harlot every night. Where am I to go? I am a beautiful woman blooming in my youth. I am also overwhelmed with the passion of love. How can I bear everything without you for company?"

61-63a. On being told thus by that young woman, the base Brāhmaṇa said: "What has been said by you is correct. Hence I shall say something beneficial to you. Extort enough money from your paramours and provide them with ample sexual pleasure. But give the entire amount to me so that I can pass it on to the street-girl. In this manner, O fair-faced woman, my desire also can be fulfilled."

63b. The woman accepted the condition contained in her husband's words.

64. The couple continued their vicious conduct for some time, when at last the Brāhmaṇa, the husband of the wayward slut, died.

65. After the death of her husband, the woman losing her youthful form and features a bit, stayed on in her house along with her sons for a long time.

66. Once, at the time of holy festivities, the woman went by chance to the shrine of Gokarṇa along with some kinsmen.

67. After taking her holy dip in the sacred waters she went to a certain temple. There she heard the holy story of the Purāṇas concerning the chiefs of gods.

68. The expounder of the Purāṇas was heard saying, "The servants of Yama in Naraka will insert red hot iron bars into the vaginal passage of the women who were enamoured of paramours (while on earth)."

69. On hearing these words of the expounder of Purāṇas expressing a religions pronouncement, she went to him secretly in great fright and told the excellent Brāhmaṇa:

70. "O Brāhmaṇa, a grave and heinous sin has been committed by me in my ignorance. I acted in a self-willed crooked manner during my youthful days.

71. On hearing your words elaborating the meanings and implications of the Purāṇa text, I am struck with great terror. My body is frequently trembling.

72. Fie upon me, the sinner deluded by lust! I had been indulging in sensual pleasures. For the sake of an insignificant pleasure I have been rushing headlong towards a great disaster.

73. "How am I going to face the awful messengers of Yama at the time of death? How can I get fortitude (to stand steady),

when I am forcibly tied with ropes round the neck?

74. How will I endure (the pain) in hell when the body will be cut into minute pieces? How will I fall into Kṣārakardama hell ('pool of saline mud') after being heated up and roasted?

75. How will I transmigrate through hundred thousands of wombs (species) of worms, insects, birds, etc. all along being tormented by masses of misery?

76. Will I relish my food henceforth? How can I, afflicted with too many miseries, go to sleep at night?

77. Alas! I am doomed. I am damned. I have been burned. My heart has been rent asunder. Alas! Oh fate, you have misguided my intellect towards great sins for a sure downfall!

78. My misery and pain is ten million times more than the terrible misery of an embodied being falling from the top of a high mountain or one pierced with a spear.

79. In all probability no purification is possible for my inordinate sin, even after performing ten thousand horse-sacrifices or taking the holy dip in Gaṅgā for a hundred years.

80. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Whom shall I seek as refuge? Who can save me in this world before I fall into the hellish sea?

81. O Brāhmaṇa, you alone are my preceptor. You are my mother. You are my father. Uplift, uplift me, a wretched woman seeking refuge in you alone."

82. When she fell at his feet with disgust and frustration, the intelligent, eminent Brāhmaṇa mercifully lifted her up and spoke thus:

The Brāhmaṇa said:

83. Fortunately you have become enlightened at the proper time after hearing the great story. Do not be afraid. I shall tell you how to attain the happy goal.

84. It was only because you listened to the holy story that your mind has become like this. There is absence of attachment to sensual objects and a great repentance (in you).

85. Repentance alone is the greatest expiation for all sins. That is why a sensible man performs expiation only through that (repentance).

86. Even after duly performing all types of expiatory rites, if men do not repent, they will not attain the excellent goal.

87. By listening to good holy stories everyday one attains the excellent goal. By residing in a holy spot the mind gets purified.

88. One attains the greatest goal through good holy stories daily heard, but a creature does not attain excellent mind and feelings through good holy vows and observances alone.

89. Just as a mirror becomes clean on being wiped frequently, so also the mind attains great purity through good stories.

90-91. When the mind becomes pure, meditation on the Consort of Umā becomes possible. Men of good actions shake off all dirts and impurities accumulated in the minds, words and bodies and attain the great region of Śaṁbhu. Hence in the case of persons deprived of merits, good holy stories constitute a good means.

92. Meditation becomes easy through (listening to) good holy stories. Through meditation excellent *Kaivalya* (liberation) becomes possible. One who listens to these good stories but fails to accomplish the great meditation, does so in the next birth and attains the great goal.

93. Ajāmila merely uttered the name (of his son) which became a Mantra and since he repented he attained the great goal.

94. Listening to good holy stories is the seed (and cause) of all prosperities of men. He who is devoid of it is only a brute. How can he get release from bondage?

95. Hence, withdrawing the mind (intellect) from all sensual objects, practising the most excellent devotion, always listen to good holy stories. Your mind will become pure by habitually listening to good stories.

96-97a. Thereby you will be meditating on the Lord of the universe and then will attain salvation. Liberation in the case of one who meditates on the lotus-like feet of Śiva, is possible in a single birth. There is no doubt in its possibility. It is the truth that I say.

97b-99. On being told thus, the woman became full of tears. She fell at his feet and said, "I have achieved my object. I am contented."

In the same great holy spot, from the same excellent Brāhmaṇa, she heard the excellent holy story that yielded emancipation as fruit. The Brāhmaṇa narrated to her a story full of non-attachment (to worldly affairs).

100-101. It was a story on hearing which a man immediately forsakes addiction to sensual objects. The Brāhmaṇa told her the stories pertaining to Śiva in a manner whereby her mind became

pure and free from attachment. As and when her mind attained more and more purity, he imparted to her the path of meditation on Śaṁbhu.

102. The heart of the Brāhmaṇa woman gradually became free from the impurities of Rajas and Tamas. All the sense-organs were withdrawn from the objects of pleasure. Thereafter, possessed of the pure truth, her heart became capable of reflecting on the form of the Lord of the universe.

103. Thus by resorting to a good Guru the woman became successful in making her mind pure. She frequently meditated on the person of Śaṁbhu consisting of blissful consciousness.

104-106. She had her holy bath in the sacred waters regularly. She wore matted hairs and bark garments. She smeared Bhasma all over the body. She had Rudrākṣas for her ornaments. Her ardour in repeating the names of Śiva increased. She never spoke unnecessarily. She ate vary little. She sat in Padmāsana (Lotus-posture) eager to listen to the good holy stories. She was never perturbed. She was regular in attending upon her Guru. She never felt any special attraction to her sons and friends. She practically abandoned them. She propitiated Śiva thus in the manner expounded by her Guru.

107. "O Lord of the universe, O cause of the destruction, sustenance and birth of the universe, O sole person deserving the salutation of the universe, O Śiva, the permanent one of cosmic form, O destroyer of Kāla, O lord illuminated by opposite qualities, O glorious Maheśa, direct your kind glance towards me.

108. O Śaṁbhu who have made the moon your crest jewel, O lord of quiescent form, O holder of Gaṅgā, O lord whose lotus-like feet have been worshipped by the most excellent ones among the immortal beings, O lord with the great serpents for ornaments, whose abode is the Lord of mountains, O destroyer of the distress of devotees, direct your kind glance towards me.

109. O glorious lord of the universe, the merciful, O trident-bearing lord, O lord of goblins, O Bharga whose reputation has been sung about in all the three worlds, O blue-necked lord, O slayer of Madana, O lord of Gaurī, O cosmic-formed one, direct your benign glances towards me."

110. Praying thus everyday devoutly to the great Lord, and listening to the good holy stories, she snapped all bonds of Karmas.

111. In due course the woman cast off her mortal body. Taken by the followers of Maheśa, she reached the place of Śiva.

112-115. There she saw the great Lord with Umā being served and attended upon by Devas. He was also meditated upon by Gaṇeśa, Nandin, Bhṛṅgin and others as well as Vīrabhadreśvara and others. She saw the Lord of Gaurī, having the lustre of ten million suns, the three-eyed, five-faced, blue-throated Sadāśiva. He was having Gaurī shining lustrously like lightning on his left lap. On seeing the Lord, she became thrilled and bowed frequently. Tears of joy flowed and drenched her. Hairs stood on end all over her body. She was kindly honoured by Pārvatī and Śaṅkara.

116. Obtaining a permanent residence in that everlasting world, abounding in the greatest bliss and brilliance she derived unobstructed happiness.

117. Once she approached and bowed down to Goddess Umā and asked her, "What has happened to my husband?"

118. The great goddess said to her, "Your husband of evil intentions suffered the miseries of Naraka and was born as a Piśāca (ghost) on Vindhya."

119. The lady once again asked the goddess, the deity of the three worlds, "By what means can my husband attain the goal of the good?"

The goddess said:

120. If at any time he hears our story of great merit, he shall surmount all the evil results and attain this region.

121. On hearing the words of Gaurī, the woman joined her palms in reverence and requested the goddess for the expiation of the sins of her husband.

122. Repeatedly requested by her, Pārvatī took pity on her. She called a Gandharva named Tumburu and said thus:

123-124. "O Tumburu, welfare unto you. Go to the Vindhya Mountain along with this lady. There is a Piśāca there, who was her husband of evil intention. Recount before him the highly meritorious story featuring our good qualities. When he is rid of his evil plight, bring him near Śiva."

125. On being commanded thus by the goddess, Tumburu bowed to her. Accompanied by the other lady, he hastened to the Vindhya Mountain by an aerial chariot.

126. There, he saw the Piśāca with a huge body, red eyes and big jaw. He was laughing and crying by turns and jumping and

prancing about.

127. Tumburu seized him by force, tied him with ropes and kept him at rest. With the lute in his hands he sang the story of the Lord of Gaurī.

128. On listening to the extremely meritorious story of the Enemy of Tripura, the Piśāca shook off all his sins within seven days and regained the lost memory.

129. He cast off his ghostly body and attained a divine form. He himself thereafter began to sing the glorious life story of the Lord of Pārvatī.

130. Assuming a divine form, he got into the aerial chariot along with Tumburu and accompanied by his beloved he began to sing about the fascinating good qualities of Maheśa and attained the eternal state of liberation.

Sūta said:

131. Thus, the meritorious narrative destructive of sins, pleasing to Maheśvara and a sure means of pure knowledge, has been recounted.

132-133. The enumeration of the good qualities of Śambhu is destructive of sins and is very wonderful. It generates excessive bliss and it is a great antidote against the ailments of worldly existence. One who listens to it or glorifies it with great concentration enjoys here different kinds of pleasures. Being liberated, he attains the greatest goal.

Sūta said:

134. O excellent sages, you are all contented and blessed, because you take in the fresh nectar of the stories of Śambhu.

135. Fruitful is their birth among the worldly creatures, whose mind meditates upon the Lord of the universe, whose speech eulogizes his good qualities and ears listen to the story (of Śiva). They cross the ocean of worldly existence.

136. I resort to Paramaśiva abounding in endless bliss; his form is never touched by the variations of Guṇas (qualities); he is equally great in his majesty in the world both within and without; he sports about in his own brilliance; he is far beyond the reach of speech and mind.

:: End of Brāhmottara-Khaṇḍa ::

:: End of Brāhma-Khaṇḍa ::

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